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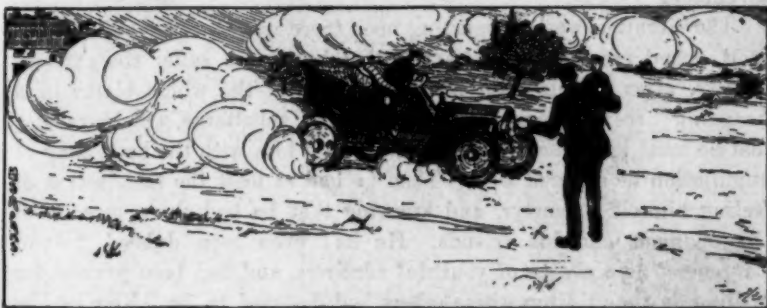
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HE WHO STOLE AND RODE AWAY

BY C. N. AND A. M. WILLIAMSON

Authors of "The Lightning Conductor"

I

"I 'VE given you fair warning," said the landlord.

"Fair warning's no use to me," said Laurence O'Hagan. "I can't do anything—except wait."

"But I can. I've waited long enough, and too long. Nor will you wait any longer—at my expense. I warn you again, young sir"—and the landlord shook a podgy, prosperous finger—"if you don't pay your bill to-day by five o'clock, by which time you can easily get an answer if you telegraph for remittances, I shall—sell—your—automobile."

"It is n't my automobile," said Laurence.

"I've told you I don't believe that."

"You are monstrously rude, sir."

"And you are a monstrous impostor."

This to one who a few short weeks ago had been the gayest, youngest, most popular captain in a smart regiment. Larry O'Hagan's hot Irish blood beat a tattoo in his ears. But he was twenty-six, and

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had been the best boxer and fencer in the 99th Inniskillens. The landlord of the Hotel Bella Italia in Venice was German, was sixty, and bore a grotesque resemblance to an egg supported on a couple of matches. The one weapon permissible in the circumstances, therefore, was the tongue; and though Larry was fortunately—or unfortunately—fluent both in Italian and German, he was nevertheless at a terrible disadvantage.

The situation was a disgusting one; there was no other adjective to fit it. And even when he learned that he was to suffer the extreme penalty, after taking upon his own shoulders the whole blame in a “ragging” scandal seriously concerning his subalterns, the knowledge that he must leave the army had not pierced him with the keen pang of humiliation he suffered now. Then he had at least the satisfaction of feeling himself a martyr, and knowing that he had the sympathy of the regiment and his friends. He had even been dubbed “Saint Laurence” by a chorus of youthful admirers, and had been praised for grilling on the gridiron where others had deserved to lie. Now he was a penniless foreigner, accused of a mean fraud, and unable at the moment to prove his innocence. Here, in Venice, at the Bella Italia, he was not Captain O’Hagan, a popular young gentleman whose honesty, if not his wisdom, was unimpeachable. He was merely a chauffeur suspected of telling abominable lies for the sake of living in luxury at a landlord’s expense.

“I suppose you understand that, if you were n’t old enough to be my grandfather, I’d knock you down,” he said forcibly, if futilely.

“You’d only go to prison if you did; and if you’re not careful, you will in any case,” returned the German, who knew his unwelcome guest only as “Mr. Laurence, of London.”

“You won’t dare to try and sell the car,” said Larry.

“There’s no need to try. I have a buyer ready.”

“You’ll be guilty of an illegal act.”

Herr Werner laughed. “You are a fine person to talk of illegal acts. I will risk all that, thank you! What—you come to me; you engage the best and largest and most expensive suite in my house, in the high season, May; you make up a plausible tale about being a gentleman chauffeur and courier for a millionaire family landing at Brindisi from India, who will arrive here at a certain date; you say you were engaged in London by the firm who made the automobile you are to drive; that you were charged by them to deliver it at Mestre, ready for their clients. You have a tale about the cost of transportation to be paid at this end, and you get me to advance the money, which I do, because you impress me as a gentleman and a person I can trust. You put your automobile in an expensive garage; you spin about in it here and there, to ‘test the speed,’ as the car is yet ‘new and untried.’

You run up little bills for essence and oil, as well as keep. You live in the grand suite you have engaged at my hotel; you eat and drink of the best. You pretend to be surprised that your millionaire employers do not appear. I present my account to you at the end of the week. You pay no attention, much less do you pay money. The people of the garage come to me and make inquiries. I am in partnership with them—yes. Why not? All my visitors keep their cars there. I politely ask you what is to be done. You put me off by saying that any day the family Ransome may arrive. I still believe in you, you are so plausible—although I think it a strange thing that the ship you named came in at Brindisi many days ago, yet the Ransomes, for whom you have engaged my rooms, neither come nor send. I present my second *note*. You pretend to send off letters and telegrams. Nothing happens. You have now lived in my hotel for three weeks and paid nothing, neither here nor at the garage. For transportation of your car from London to Mestre, I advanced you over a thousand francs. The price of the suite you have occupied is fifteen of your English sovereigns for each day. Reckon up the total, and add your own living expenses, with the garage; it is a little fortune! I was a fool to believe such a cock-and-bull story. This Major Ransome and his wife and family will never arrive. The automobile is not theirs, but yours. All the papers were made out in your name. You have been cheating me—I, who pride myself in judging a face and never being taken in by sharpers. I tell you, sir, this is the end. I sell your car—yours, I repeat—to a guest now in the hotel, who is wanting a bargain. If there are consequences, I will face them, but I am not afraid. And you have still time to prove yourself right, me wrong: up till five o'clock."

"Very well," said Larry, as pale as he had been red, but suddenly composed. The position was unspeakable; but he had an idea.

Herr Werner's office, in which the young man had undergone his ordeal, commanded a view of lift and stairway. Like a fat spider in its web, the landlord could sit in his sanctum, with open door, and watch his paying flies buzz up and down. Without another word, Larry walked to the lift, audaciously making work for a servant of Herr Werner; and under his creditor's angry eyes, he ascended to the first story, whither he might have walked if he had not wished to be conspicuous.

He did not, however, spend five minutes in his own corner of the magnificent suite for which so many thousands of *lire* were owing. No sooner had he put together a few things in a parcel small enough to tuck under his arm, than he ran down again, taking the servants' staircase, by means of which he could escape into an alley. Thence, by devious ways, such as Venetians know, and those who love Venice soon find out, he arrived at a steamboat-station on the Grand Canal.

He was going to do an unwarrantable thing—or a thing that in most circumstances would be unwarrantable. But a man placed between two evils must choose that which seems to him the lesser.

A boat for Mestre came in almost immediately, and, though Larry had decided upon a course of action, he spent the short voyage in reviewing his situation.

His father, grave and stern as a North of Ireland man can be, considered that his son's sentence had disgraced the family. The culprit was not welcome at home, and would have swept crossings rather than ask his father for money to supplement the diminutive income inherited from his dead mother. He sold his automobile, which, though good, was just enough out of date not to fetch a high price; and on the same day chanced to meet a friend who had lately left the army and become junior partner in a motor-car manufactory.

Larry O'Hagan told Tom Petrie that he envied him. Tom Petrie asked Larry if he would "like a job." Larry said "yes," for he loved motoring, and all that was therein.

"Some people named Ransome have ordered one of our cars," Petrie explained; "forty horse-power Gryphon. They're millionaires; at least, Mrs. Ransome's step-daughter's a millionairess, I'm told by the man who recommended them to our firm, and the step-mother's guardian till the girl comes of age, or takes a husband. Mamma married for the second time years ago, this Major Ransome, and has been swelling about at Indian stations, while the girl was left at school in France. Now she's twenty, and in common decency they've got to bring her out. The fellow who told me thinks the idea is to marry her off to Ransome's son by his first wife, so the money can stay in the family. Anyhow, there's plenty of oof at present, and the Ransomes want the car they've ordered sent to Venice immediately, as they arrive at Brindisi the 8th of May on the *Egypta*. They won't begin a trip there, for they think it would be dull; but they mean to spend a few weeks in Venice, pottering about and making a few excursions, till it gets too hot, then striking off for the Tyrol. The girl's to join them at Venice with a companion-maid, so there's a chance for some one to cut out young Ransome with the heiress—eh, what? They've written asking us to engage a gentleman chauffeur with a knowledge of French, German, and Italian, who can act as courier, take rooms for them at the Bella Italia in Venice, and be altogether a valuable, handy sort of man for rich and helpless tourists to have about. We've tried for such a *rara avis* in vain so far. You'd be a ram caught in the bushes, for you *can* drive; you're a nailer at lingos; and you're a gentleman as well as the best of good fellows. There's the job. What do you think of it?"

Larry thought it was made for him, and that, as he was "out of

his own job," he could n't have a better temporary one, or one more calculated to take his mind off unpleasant memories. Ex-Captain Larry O'Hagan transformed himself for the time being into Mr. Laurence, a gentleman chauffeur, and departed for Venice, the Gryphon being sent by train. He expected his employers to join him a few days after his arrival, but they had neither come nor written, though he had wired to the P. and O. offices at Brindisi and learned that they had, on landing, departed immediately, leaving no address. Larry had waited, hoping hourly for news, his small store of money dwindling. He had written to Tom Petrie, but Petrie knew no more than he did of the Ransomes or their movements. *Voilà* the present desperate position.

Larry could not wire to Petrie to help him out of the scrape with money, for Petrie was not rich, nor was he a personal friend of the Ransomes. There was a maternal aunt from whom Larry had expectations, but she would do nothing for him in such a case as this; to apply to his father was out of the question; and there was no one else.

Still, he believed in the Ransomes. His notion was that Major Ransome had probably been taken ill, the family plans upset, and the family mind confused. They would not realize the difficulties in which the unknown chauffeur might be floundering at a distance. Being rich, and of consequence, it would not occur to them that the use of their name might not tide him over an indefinite length of time, until they remembered to write and adjust matters.

He had a certain feeling of loyalty to his employers, and even a vague interest in them, since, judging from Petrie's account, they must be a curiously assorted group. It seemed to him that, if he allowed the angry landlord to carry out his threat, he—Larry—would be blameworthy. Of course the Ransomes could recover the value of the car from the obstinate old brute; but more Gryphons were on order than could be supplied, and it might be a long time before the Ransomes could obtain another. Their summer would be spoiled, perhaps, and, though it would be a just punishment for carelessness, still, Larry, who was a true sportsman, would gladly spare them that punishment if he could. He had grown fond of the handsome Gryphon, too, and could not bear to stand idle and see it, as he said to himself, "sold over his head."

That was why he had left the hotel unseen by Herr Werner, and why he was going to Mestre; for the Gryphon was in garage at Mestre; and before Herr Werner should discover his absence he planned to steal the car.

Yes, *steal!* He used the word frankly in his thoughts. But he was not going to steal her for himself. It was for her owners that he would do this thing.

There was a chance that he might already be too late; that the

enemy's foresight had leaped ahead of his intention; but he assumed the indifference he did not feel, as he sauntered into the garage. Until within the last few days, when he had been too dispirited to go far afield, the chauffeur had been in the habit of "exercising" the Gryphon occasionally, and, notwithstanding his debt to the garage, no objection had been made to his taking the car out.

Larry walked in, whistling. The morning was young, and the employees of the garage were busily preparing several other automobiles for departure. No one appeared to notice him. There was enough petrol left in the tank from the last short outing to carry the car a long distance, and he thought it wise not to annex a further supply. He had about eight or ten sovereigns of his own, and could buy when the need came. As for the money he would have to pay at the Austrian frontier (which he must reach as soon as possible), the deposit returned from the Italian *douane* would nearly cover that. Had he more gold in his pocket, however, he would try to run past the Italian frontier without stopping to reclaim the deposit. He feared lest news of his arrival might rush over the wires in advance of him; but poverty would force him to take the risk.

Once away from the Mestre garage, he let the car fly like an arrow; and, truth to tell, there was less remorse than joy of escape in his heart, in starting out upon the career of a thief.

Northward stretched the way that would take him to Austria and to freedom; and, spinning along the straight, smooth road, Larry grudged each new call to slow down for some restive horse; but the more haste the less speed, when there was a question of drawing upon himself the attention of the police.

Flying over the great plain which lies at the foot of the Alps, he was not long in reaching the high red walls of Treviso. But instead of entering the city, he skirted it, and passed again into open country, the dim, purple line of the Alps floating high in the heavens, like a mirage.

Larry had never travelled this road before, but he had studied it for the trip he had expected to take with his phantom employers, and he knew for what to look. He flashed across the imposing bridge which spans the Piave; into shady Conegliano by a road where two ranks of garden gods, carved in stone, seemed to smile encouragement on his adventure; then on towards Vittorio; and so far he had met no check.

At every town, at every *octroi* station, he was on the alert, for it might be that already the wires were hot with clamoring demands for his apprehension. Nevertheless, his hopes were high, and ever running higher. For some time, it would be supposed that he was shut up in the Ransomes' fine, unpaid-for suite of rooms, gazing down upon the Grand Canal. Besides, he had been given till five o'clock to

pay or take the consequences. And then, it was one thing to seize the car while it lay in the rich landlord's own garage at Mestres; another to stop a British subject on the high-road, even if he were accused of owing a big hotel bill.

These things Larry told himself as he reached the mountains, one stage nearer Austria. Huge heights loomed above him; the way ran beside a river which coursed down from hidden clefts among the Alps. To his left, beyond a fork in the road, he could see the towers of Belluno; but he held straight on to Longarone, where a sandwich and a glass of rough red wine, hastily snatched at a *trattoria*, refreshed him amazingly, and he dashed on again at speed.

His thoughts were very busy now. If he got safely over the frontier, he meant to pause at Toblach—nearer he dared not halt—and try to inform the missing Ransomes of what he had ventured in their interests. He would send a long wire to Petrie of the Gryphon and Majestic Co. who might by this time have heard something of them. And either there (since at Toblach one came into a great tourist centre) or at Innsbrück, he must try to earn enough money to go on with, by letting out the Gryphon with himself as chauffeur, awaiting news of the Ransomes.

Thus reflecting, he passed through a narrow, winding gorge. The grapes, the figs, the almonds, characteristic of Italy, had vanished; instead, there were forests of balsamic pines, suggestive of the north—and Austria. Up and up went an interminable hill. A great fort sulked on a rocky eminence; and beyond lay the beauty of Pieve di Cadore. But there was no time for Larry to do homage to that beauty, no time to search for Titian's birthplace. He turned leftward, and saw before him at last the little white house of the Italian customs. A country cart was undergoing leisurely inspection by the lounging *douaniers* who prodded bales of stuff with long instruments like skewers, and peered into baskets of vegetables for contraband. Larry stopped the Gryphon, looking as unconcerned as he felt uncomfortable, and smiled engagingly at the officials, a smile that hinted wealth and generosity. With simulated composure, too, he left the car and sought the chief of the bureau, to claim from him (with despatch that must not seem like haste) the deposit paid when the Gryphon had entered Italy by train.

Innsbrück was mentioned as his destination; his papers were examined; the money counted out; and, hiding impatience under ceremonious adieux, Larry made for the door. One twist of the starting-handle, and the car leaped into feverish activity. Next instant, the undetected thief was in his seat, his foot upon the clutch. But in that instant he heard within the office a furious ringing at the telephone.

That ringing might concern any one in the world except himself;

yet sure keen instinct told Larry that it concerned him, and no one in the world besides.

A country cart blocked his way. He could not rush straight on, but had to back, and turn out for the clumsy vehicle; meanwhile he heard the voice of the official talking at the telephone. Then, just as he had cleared the course and was ready to dash down it, the chief himself bounded to the door.

"Stop!" yelled the Italian; but Larry feigned deafness, and was off like the wind, the Gryphon gathering speed with every second. A half-turn of the head showed her driver that one of the custom-house men had leaped on a bicycle and was pursuing him bent-backed, like a conscientious goblin; but he could laugh at bicyclists. And he did laugh, in growing excitement, until suddenly he was confronted with a new danger. Before him, twenty yards away, was the advance post of the *douanerie*, a little sentry-box where two Italian soldiers lounged, their rifles slung upon their backs. These fellows straightened up at sight of the flying car, and their pursuing comrade, toiling in a cloud of dust behind.

Guessing that something was wrong, both soldiers stepped pluckily into the road to bar the way. One raised his carbine to his shoulder. "But he won't dare shoot," thought Larry; "and they can't stand there to be ridden down."

With the light of battle in his eye, he kept on his unswerving course; and then, close to the soldiers, gave vent to an unearthly yell. Astonished, horrified at the madman, human nature bade the sentinels fall back, and they jumped aside like grasshoppers. "Thank goodness!" breathed Larry; for had they held their ground against his calculations, he must perforce have stopped, and lost himself to save them.

Never was kilometre devoured in quicker time by a mere touring-car, than that which stretched between the sentry-box and the first Austrian post. A little further was the *douane*, and luckily there were no rival vehicles waiting there, and the officials had all their time to give the Gryphon. Various necessary papers were made out, and nothing inconvenient happened; but, to Larry's dismay, he found that he must deposit nearly double the sum which had let the car into Italy; and when the money was handed over he had no more than ten florins in his possession.

It was something to get away unmolested; nevertheless, the plot thickened. True, he had snatched the Gryphon from under the greedy paw of fat Herr Werner; but he had not enough petrol left to take him down the Pusterthal and over the formidable Brenner Pass; nor had he enough money remaining to buy drink for his Gryphon and food for himself, after to-night.

Whether he liked or not, he must stop and be "hung up" at Toblach, until somehow or other he could contrive to push on farther. Very fast his thoughts worked, keeping time with the flight of the car, as he sped over the exquisite road shadowed by mountains and Dolomitic needles, which led to Cortina. The beautiful town, with its picture-houses in flowery meadows, he passed without a pause, tourists taking their coffee on hotel verandas staring at the swift automobile as it flashed by.

"They don't look as if they would want to hire me," he said to himself. "They all seem too happy and restful where they are, the beggars! Anyhow, there's too much risk for me this side of Toblach—if only I can get there."

The road serpented up through miles of pineland. When would the petrol be finished, and the car breathe its last sigh? With each stage of the way safely accomplished, Larry thanked all his lucky stars; and, the top of the pass reached, it was in all the joy of triumph that he coasted down through Schluderbach. Below him, the trough of the Pusterthal crossed his road. There at last was Toblach! He was safe now to get there.

"Hurrah!" he said to himself, as, empty-lunged, the Gryphon drew up before the door of Toblach's biggest hotel.

On the veranda were many people; but a group standing at the top of the steps separated themselves from the others to Larry's eyes. As for the rest, their sole striking characteristic was a resemblance to the great family of tourists dispersed about the world. But these three were different; at least, one was different, and glorified her two companions. For she was a very pretty girl, and even more interesting than pretty.

II

As the car stopped, this group of three was so near that Larry's first look was into the girl's eyes. They were big, gray eyes, as innocent as a nun's, yet with a latent spark of daring, and a hint of humor in the curl of the dark lashes. It occurred to Larry O'Hagan that, though he had seen girls more beautiful, he had never seen one with eyes like these; and he was sure that they must really be eyes beyond the common, for the impression he got was flashed to him in a second. As he drove up, the girl had been on the point of going, and the glance she gave him was thrown over a half-turned shoulder. She did not linger to look at the motorist or his motor. Obeying her first intention, she walked away, and went into the house; but even if Larry had not seen her face, he would have guessed from her back that it ought to be worth seeing. The tall figure in gray was as graceful as girlish, and the firm, straight-ahead step expressed character. Besides, no woman

who was not pretty would dare to coil even the waviest yellow-brown hair so simply at the nape of a slender neck.

Larry was dimly conscious of mortification that such a girl should show so little interest in such a car—or perhaps in such a chauffeur; for, though he had never been vainer than other young men, and had lately become less vain than most, as Captain O'Hagan he had been too much spoiled by charming, unwise ladies not to be aware of his attractions. But though the girl could march away without a second glance at him or his handsome Gryphon, her companions made up for her indifference by their interest; and they were agreeably noticeable against a dull background of tourists.

One was a young woman, the other a young man. They were both handsome, and handsome in the same way, for their likeness to one another advertised twinship.

The young woman owned the full-blown beauty of a Viennese; the young man had somewhat the effect of being laced and buttoned into Austrian uniform under his light tweeds. The pair were dark and gorgeous; and their united age might have made up half a century.

Larry O'Hagan was dark also, with the blue-eyed, black-haired darkness which Ireland gives to some of her sons and daughters; but, if he was Celtic, he was also British to the least observant glance; and as he sat awaiting the leisurely approach of a hotel servant to whom he wished to speak, it was not strange that the brother and sister on the steps should feel free to comment on him in German. Britishers might gabble a little French, perhaps, but they were safe not to know German!

"If only you had a car like that, Paulchen!" exclaimed the handsome young woman. "What would it not be to us now?"

"If I had, I shouldn't have the money to run it," returned the handsome young man.

"I could have helped you out for a fortnight, and—a fortnight ought to do the trick. Heavens! what a cruel situation! Is there nothing we can do to save it, now that I have brought her? She was so delighted with the idea of the visit to your chateau."

"I could cheerfully murder the men in possession," said "Paulchen," testing the point of his waxed mustache. "But if I did, I fear I should n't be able to offer you and your friend hospitality for long, my Emmichen."

"How can you have the heart to joke? There must be some way out. We must decide something at once. We can't stay on here. And we *can't* let her slip. What if I should *hire* an automobile, and pretend that you had invited us to take a tour in it, because Schloss Waldberg was—undergoing repairs?"

"Automobiles are expensive," sighed Paul. "That one, for instance, if for hire, would certainly cost a hundred *gulden* a day."

"Ah, I could not run to that," sighed Emmichen—"not for long enough to give you time, even if I pawned my jewels."

The waiter upon whom Larry had fixed an eye now turned an eye to Larry; and, gathering up the last teacup which his loaded tray would hold, came towards the steps.

Meanwhile, Larry's brain worked fast. Talk of rams caught by the horns in bushes! But the horns must be extricated with delicacy. He must not dare to speak in German. The thing to do was to trust that the pair knew French. All educated Austrians and Germans knew French!

"Have you a garage belonging to this hotel?" Larry cried hastily to the waiter, lest brother and sister should move away before his trap was baited. "I want to put up my car for the night—perhaps longer. You have plenty of tourists here? My intention is to let the automobile by the day or week to travellers, my services thrown in, and all at a bargain."

Yes, they did know French. They had thrown a look of intelligence at each other. And they did not move away. For a moment, as the chauffeur and waiter talked, the brother and sister parleyed together in excited whispers, each with an ear open to the audible conversation. By the time Larry had learned that there was a garage—an all new and commodious garage—and had sent for a tin of *essence* to carry him there, the pair had reached a decision. Spurred on by the young woman, the young man descended two or three steps and addressed Larry in badly accented French.

Cautiously (remembering, no doubt, certain revelations) he began with a question. "Do you understand German?"

"It will be better if you will kindly speak in French," was Larry's diplomatic answer.

"Paulchen" looked relieved, and so did "Emmichen." "I heard you tell the waiter that you wished to let out your automobile," went on the Austrian. "It happens that I was thinking of hiring one for a tour with my sister and a friend of hers, who have arrived to visit me. Yours is a handsome car; but I cannot afford to pay a high price. I would prefer to take another not so fine. You say you offer a bargain. May I ask what is your idea of a bargain?"

Larry paused to do what he had not yet had time to do—reflect. He had no desire to make money for himself on a car which was not his. He must have his keep, and the Gryphon's keep; he wanted no more.

"I am an amateur, out partly for enjoyment," said he, to disarm possible suspicion. "I ask only enough to cover expenses—my own and the car's. Say fifty francs a day, if you will engage me for a week certain."

"Tell him that you will and perhaps for longer," prompted the

sister, in German. "If you haggle, some one else will get him. It is a great chance."

"*Eh bien!*" exclaimed her brother. "Consider yourself engaged. I am Captain the Baron Paul von Waldern, and my sister is the Duchess de Rocheverte. But the *Duc* will not be with us. He is—travelling. There will be only our two selves and one guest—a light weight for an automobile. What is your name, and what is the make of your car, if you please?"

Larry styled himself Richard Laurence (he had a Richard sandwiched in among other names), showed his papers, discovered that Baron Paul knew nothing of motoring, and parted from the brother and sister at last with the satisfactory knowledge that his future was assured—for at least a week.

His new employer was to let him know, during the evening, the hour for starting next morning and some details of the tour. Meanwhile, he was to take a room (but not a costly room) in the hotel at Baron Paul von Waldern's expense.

"The troublesome part is," the duchess had remarked in German to her brother as they walked away, "that the man's a gentleman, and may want to put on airs. But one mustn't look a gift horse in the mouth—or a gift motor-car under the bonnet."

Larry thought it very probable that he should want to put on airs, but resolved not to yield to temptation, even when a pair of bewildering gray eyes should be upon him. On engaging to serve the Ransomes, he had been offered privileges, and had taken advantage of them at Venice; but he made no stipulations now, except that he should have an advance of a few *gulden* upon his "wages."

He had come away from the Hotel Bella Italia in the morning with only a small and inconspicuous parcel under his arm—a parcel containing a few of the barest necessities; and before the shops of the village could be shut he went out to supplement them on the baron's—or the duchess's—generosity. Coming out from the post-office where he had telegraphed to Tom Petrie, he paused before an exhibition of picture post-cards. On one the name "Schloss Waldberg" caught his eye. It was printed under a colored photograph of a picturesque mediæval castle, perched upon a pine-clad eminence, with Dolomite mountains in the near background.

"Ah, the baron's chateau is a show place," he said to himself; and, buying the post-card, he questioned the rosy *Fraülein* who sold it.

Yes, Schloss Waldberg was in the neighborhood—about twelve miles from Toblach. Excursionists went to look at it sometimes, but strangers were not allowed inside the castle. They could do no more than take photographs from a distance—across the river. The owner, Baron Paul von Waldern, let the place sometimes, when he could; but

people said the house was not in good repair. It was better outside than in, for the family were poor, and could not keep things as they should be kept. Yes, the little *Fraülein* believed the young baron was living there himself now, with only a servant or two to look after him; so she had heard. It was certain he had left the army, and only lately. There was gossip—talk of card debts and so on; but who could tell what was the truth about persons of the aristocracy whom one did n't know? She had seen the Baron Paul, but not for several years—not since his father died. Now there was no one left in the family except the young man and his twin sister, who had been at school in France, and married a titled Frenchman, a duke whose name was of the sort you could not remember, or pronounce if you did remember. But it was said that this duke, who had been rich when he married, had lost nearly everything now, and travelled for some commercial firm. Yet that, too, was gossip, and *Mammachen* would not approve if she heard her daughter repeating it.

With this information concerning his new employers, Larry went back to the hotel, and ate a solitary dinner, trying to fit the pieces of a puzzle together.

If, as the Duchess de Rocheverte said, it was unwise to look a gift motor-car under the bonnet, it would be ungrateful to pry into the secrets of employers who had, so to speak, fallen upon him like manna in the desert. Larry had no wish to pry; but he was human; he had looked into a girl's eyes; and he could not help wanting to know how those eyes and their owner were concerned in Von Waldern and Rocheverte affairs.

That they were concerned, and intimately concerned, was evident. The "she" of whom the duchess and her brother had so earnestly talked together could be no other than the girl who had just left them. And though Larry would thankfully have accepted the engagement if it had offered no attractions, the knowledge that the girl with the eyes would be of the party did not leave him indifferent. He deduced that she had been enticed by the duchess to Toblach, with the prospect of staying in a beautiful, old-world castle among the Dolomites. Then something untoward had happened. "Paulchen" had met the ladies with bad news, which only his sister must hear. There had been a murmur concerning "men in possession," if Larry had not misunderstood. And if he had not, it was a very embarrassing position for the would-be host of two such charming visitors. Larry, fallen temporarily upon evil days, could find it in his heart to be sorry for his employer; and yet he was not drawn towards handsome Baron Paul. There was a hard glitter in the great black eyes which a woman might not see, but which repelled a man's sympathy—especially if the man were a son of Britain.

"No wonder the duchess wished for a motor-car!" thought Larry, revolving probabilities. "The brother's affairs seem rather well known in this neighborhood. It would n't do to stop long here, even if it were convenient—and cheap. Well, I must look stolid if I hear them talk to the girl about 'necessary repairs at Schloss Waldberg,' and I must n't let myself in for overhearing any more family secrets. It's too uncomfortable. My knowledge of German will have to increase by leaps and bounds. I shall buy a phrase-book and let them know I have a surprising gift for picking up languages."

As he meditated, there came a message for the chauffeur. The Baron Paul von Waldern wished to see him in No. 4A, the Duchess de Rocheverte's private sitting-room.

Larry rose, and obeyed the summons, surprised as he stood at the door to find that his heart was beating rather faster than usual.

It was a very small sitting-room that he was bidden to enter, and the trio he had seen grouped together on the steps were again grouped closely together, facing him, as he went in. He felt suddenly as if he were an actor on a diminutive stage, without any footlights, and the audience almost upon him.

He had wondered, as he stood at the door, if the girl would be there; and she was, sitting on a sofa, with her hand clasped in the duchess's left hand, the duchess's right arm round her waist. On her other side, Baron Paul had drawn up his chair, and between the brother and sister she was fenced in. It seemed as if the Von Waldern family had taken possession of her, and did not mean to let her go.

She was prettier than ever. She had probably been in the act of going away to change for dinner when Larry had first seen her, for the gray travelling-dress she wore then had been replaced by a white muslin, with a soft, lace-edged fichu which was crossed, Puritan-fashion, over her bosom and tied behind the slim waist.

"This is my English chauffeur," announced the baron in French.

It was not an introduction. Rather was it an indication of a chattel, a chattel in which an Austrian nobleman might feel a kind of pleasant pride. Larry was not sure, if this preface were a specimen of what he had to expect, that he would not be tempted beyond his strength to the "putting on" of those "airs" which the duchess had prophesied. The chattel grew faintly red in the face as the girl looked up. But annoyance changed to another emotion under her smile—a bright, quick, understanding, and even sympathizing smile.

"How do you do?" she asked in English. "But are you *really* English?"

"I'm Irish," said Larry.

"I thought so," she said. "I'm partly Irish, so I can generally tell a fellow countryman."

When she had said this and smiled again, she leaned back as if to show that she had finished. But she had said enough to do exactly what she intended to do: prove to the chauffeur, and prove to his employer, that she could recognize a gentleman when she saw one; also that, whatever his position at the moment, in her eyes a gentleman was always a gentleman, and should be treated as such.

Larry looked at her with respectful gratitude, this girl whose name he did not even know; but mentally he was kissing her hand.

She had given Baron Paul a little lesson; and he knew it, for his manner changed visibly, as if in indication that he was glad to please her. "Ah, a countryman of yours, Mees Lee!" he echoed, with a gracious nod for the chauffeur. "Well, Laurence, I sent for you to say that the duchess and Mees Lee wish to go into Bavaria, and see the castles of the Mad King. Their will"—and he glanced at the girl—"is my law. We will start to-morrow morning at ten."

"Bavaria is cheaper than Austria," Larry reflected; but aloud he murmured acquiescence with the baron's will, and, thus murmuring, wondered why he felt almost irresistibly impelled to punch the baron's head. In his own, the idea was growing that the Austrians, brother and sister, were bent upon giving Miss Lee an impression that the motor-car trip had been premeditated. He was almost sure "Paulchen" had made the girl believe that chauffeur and car belonged to him, body, soul, *chassis*, and all. Why he should personally object to having this impression conveyed, he was not quite sure; but he was very sure that he did object, and strenuously, too.

"The fellow wants her to think him no end of a swell, and rich enough to keep no end of motors eating their heads off in his garage, until it occurs to him to bring one out and use it—to please a lady," Larry thought venomously.

His friend, Jack Paget, had lately been having some queer experiences as a chauffeur. Larry had heard of them in letters, and laughed at them; but for the moment he saw nothing to laugh at in his own.

III

HERR WERNER was in his room which commanded the ugly new lift, and the noble old stairway once trodden by princely owners. On the frescoed ceiling of the hall a network of golden lights quivered in reflected glory from the Grand Canal outside. The window, looking upon the courtyard where the fountain splashed in a basin of marble, was framed with a purple fringe of wistaria. Venice was in her most brilliant spring beauty, and the Hotel Bella Italia was crammed; yet Herr Werner was in a bad temper. He hated to be thwarted, hated to be "got the better of"; and he had been thwarted and got the better

of by a youngster whom he apostrophized as a "cheating, lying, rascally thief of a chauffeur."

Two days had passed since the wretch had decamped in his car, without paying his debts; and though Herr Werner had thrown a little good money after bad in revengeful attempts to track the villain down, he had thus far been unsuccessful in tracing him beyond the frontier. If he chose to go to further expense, he might triumph eventually, but it was a grave question as to whether it would be worth while; and he was hesitating over the writing of a letter which would commit him to a course of action, when his son and assistant manager appeared at the door.

"Father, here are Major and Mrs. Ransome and Mr. Ransome, who wish to speak with you," announced the young man, who looked like a new and abridged edition of the elder one. "They talk only English."

Herr Werner started and looked up, frowning. He was sick of the name of Ransome, which had made him so much trouble and lost him so much hard cash. But the glare softened into milder glistening at sight of the three persons ushered by his son to the open door. His practised eye, rarely mistaken, told him that these were no impostors upon whom might be visited the sins of an escaped conspirator. They were rich, they were respectable, they were even aristocratic, this bunch of Ransomes; and the background was filled in with an even more obviously respectable valet and *femme de chambre*.

Herr Werner rose and bowed. His thoughts moved quickly. After all, then, there was a *famille Ransome*. Possibly the chauffeur had not been the owner of the automobile which he—Herr Werner—had threatened to sell in payment of the growing debt. He would soon know all; but if these Ransomes were those Ransomes, perhaps *they* had better not know all. He would be politic. He would decide what to say, and what not to say.

"The name Ransome has been on my books for the last some weeks," he began, in labored English. "Is it that——"

"We expected to arrive about three weeks ago," cut in the tall, thin, sallow gentleman with a hook nose and the air of one accustomed to command. This air the landlord knew to be characteristic of the English, the best class of English; those who were lords; those who were soldiers. Indeed, the adventurer chauffeur had had something of it; but what the experienced hotel-keeper respected in the successful irritated him in the unsuccessful. "Our rooms were engaged at this hotel——" continued Major Ransome, but Herr Werner threw up his hands in deprecation.

"Alas, sir, it is a pity. I had given you up; and those rooms—our best and most beautiful rooms—are let to others since two days ago, after being kept vacant for you these many weeks. It is quite a his-

tory; there have been misunderstandings, and I cannot blame myself——”

“It does n’t matter,” broke in the Englishman. “We have not come here now to make a long stay, though we shall be compelled to stop the night, in any case, at your hotel or some other. Have you anything you can give us?”

“I must arrange something, sir.”

“Very good. Your manager can let our servants know where the rooms are. Meanwhile, I should like a little private conversation with you.”

Young Werner swept the *femme de chambre* and the valet out of the background, and took himself away. All three members of the *famille Ransome* filed into the landlord’s room, and the door was shut behind them. Mrs. Ransome—a hard-faced woman of forty-five, with eagerly cherished remains of beauty—sat down in the chair which was offered her. Major Ransome and his son—a youth whose chin was his one retiring feature—preferred to stand.

“When we first made up our minds to come to Venice, it was arranged that my wife’s step-daughter should meet us here, with her maid,” Major Ransome explained, somewhat sharply, as if he grudged the time for explanations. “She was to come from Paris, where she has been at school since childhood. At Brindisi we received a telegram from this school, saying that Miss Eversleigh had disappeared. Instead of coming on here, we naturally took the first train for Paris, and since then have been so harassed, and in such a state of anxiety, that we have been able to give no thought to less important matters. Vaguely I understood that my wife had wired here. She had the impression (the misunderstanding arose out of a hurried conversation, never finished) that I had done so. Now your manager tells me you have not kept our rooms. Beyond that, I have heard nothing, as I asked to see you in person, immediately. You have only to make out your bill for anything owing, of course, to be paid; however, that’s a detail.”

To the mind of Herr Werner, it was far from being an insignificant one; but his bow was a polite acquiescence.

“The great question—the question that has finally brought us to Venice, in spite of all, in the hope of having it satisfactorily answered—is this: has Miss Eversleigh arrived here?”

“I fear we have not that name in the hotel books,” said Herr Werner. “Yet—it is possible the lady may be in Venice.”

“We have been obliged reluctantly to call in the aid of the French police,” went on Major Ransome. “They have communicated with the police of other countries, and a young lady accompanied by a maid, more or less answering the description of the person engaged for Miss Eversleigh, has just been traced to Vienna, from there to this neigh-

borhood. We were still in France, having followed up several false scents; but, thinking it possible that Miss Eversleigh had come to Venice as the rendezvous at which it was originally arranged for her to meet us, we hoped that at last we were on the right track. Accordingly, we have hurried here to see for ourselves. My wife has a picture of Miss Eversleigh to show you. When you have looked at it you will be able to tell me whether she is, or has been, in this hotel."

From a gold jewelled bag which hung from her arm by a chain, Mrs. Ransome produced a Russian leather case which resembled a pocket-book. This framed a colored photograph of a very young and pretty girl—so young and so pretty that even Herr Werner would scarcely have forgotten her had she ever passed the open door of his watch tower.

"The young lady is not here, has not been here," he answered decidedly. "But, as I said, she may be in Venice. Let me call my son. He goes about more than I do. He often visits the sons of other hotel proprietors."

"Certainly, call him," replied Major Ransome. "Also my chauffeur, who is, I suppose, still here, waiting for our arrival."

Herr Werner's face, always red, became redder. To explain to a rich client who has just suggested payment of his account, without haggling, that he has been considered a myth, is an awkward thing to do. Major Ransome's Indian sallowness hinted at an irritable temper. Herr Werner determined to account for the chauffeur's absence without mentioning that there had been a threat to sell the motor car.

"I regret to tell you, sir, that your confidence in your chauffeur is misplaced," the landlord began. "He has been gone for some days. He took your automobile with him; and, though I have done my best, I have not yet been able to find out where he has taken it."

Major Ransome's eyes blazed. "You mean to say the fellow has stolen my car?"

"He has done so, sir," answered the German, pleased to revenge himself upon the impudent young fellow who had spoiled his rest and damaged his digestion.

"I'll have the car back and the thief in prison before I'm many days older, if it costs me more than the price of the motor!" flashed out the Anglo-Indian.

"Oh dear! we seem fated to keep the police busy!" sighed Mrs. Ransome, unnerved by a new shock after her long journey.

"It's a thing that does n't happen to most people, to have a relative and an automobile both kidnapped within a month of each other," murmured young Mr. Ransome, with a kind of chastened pride.

"I must have a description of the fellow," said the sallow soldier, whipping out his note-book. "Height, coloring, age——"

"I can do better than that for you, sir," replied the landlord. "My

son has a snapshot of the chauffeur in the car, taken the day after their arrival."

"Pray call your son," said Major Ransome.

IV

THE baron and his sister were in no hurry to arrive in Bavaria. There was Innsbrück to see, and the Brenner to be crossed; and the mad King Ludwig's castles would not give occupation for more than a few days. The motor-car was engaged for a week, or a fortnight; but if a week should prove sufficient, all the better for the pocket of the duchess.

"If it can be settled in a week," the twin sister murmured to the twin brother, as the two inspected the automobile before starting from Toblach—"if it *can* be settled in a week, there'll be no more need of the motor. We can stop somewhere and be happy quietly."

She spoke in German, and the chauffeur was not supposed to understand; but conscience bade him at that moment drop at his employer's feet the phrase-book which he had not forgotten to buy. "English into German"—the words, black on red, stared up to their faces, and silenced them. Larry knew that he had dried the fountain of information at its source, but, though his curiosity was piqued, he did not mean to satisfy it by eavesdropping.

"What is to be settled in a fortnight—or in a week if possible?" he asked himself at starting. But by the time Innsbrück was reached, he thought that he could have answered his own question. If ever a girl was "rushed" by a young man in love, who was determined to make her fall in love and had no time to waste by the way, that girl was Miss Lee—called "Mona darling" by her friend Emmilie.

The two had her between them on the back seat, although the ladies would have been more comfortable had Baron Paul taken one of the small folding chairs which could be let down in the tonneau, or if he had sat in front beside the chauffeur. The Duchess de Rocheverte talked little, but her brother talked a great deal. He paid Miss Lee compliments on her voice, her hair, her eyes, her complexion—such compliments as Englishmen do not pay; he asked her advice about the "repairs" on his famous chateau; he wanted to know what traits a man must have to please her, and swore to cultivate all those in which he might be lacking.

In an ugly man or an old man, this would have been offensive; but Paul was young and handsome. His eyes were burning suns when he looked at Miss Lee, through her thick veil of chiffon. He was a soldier and a brilliant sportsman, if his own stories and his sister's stories were true. He could ride straight; he could shoot true; he could sing; he

could act; he could dance, and—there was no doubt—he could make love.

Conversation between the three in the tonneau was carried on in French, which Miss Lee spoke as well as she did English; and as no one seemed to think the chauffeur mattered, Larry was forced to overhear much, whether he liked or no. If the girl wished to enjoy the scenery, she was given little chance to appreciate it, for the baron made constant calls upon her attention, which he would scarcely allow to wander from himself for a moment. If, however, the girl did cry out in sudden admiration of a view—an old castle on a steep green hill or a mediæval town in a valley—the car must be stopped for her to have a longer look, or take a photograph. If she fell in love with a field of wild flowers, the motor must slow down just enough for Baron Paul to leap out bravely, at the risk of falling on his nose, to gather a bunch of forget-me-nots or wild lilies-of-the-valley, or a spray of sweet-briar, and then spring in again with dashing valor, after a fleet chase which displayed a slim, lithe figure to advantage.

Perhaps it was natural to faulty human nature that the man out of the running should regard with jealous scorn the man in the running, when a particularly charming girl was the prize. Certainly Larry did despise Baron Paul von Waldern and search for some mean incentive in everything he did or said.

Cad, bounder, soapy sentimentalist, silly idiot, were only a few of the adjectives with which the hired chauffeur had mentally apostrophized his employer between morning and evening of the first day out.

He did not believe one of the romantic tales which the baron had told about himself or his castle or his ancestors; and so extreme was his disgust for the Austrian nobleman that his hand on the steering-wheel tingled to do the fellow a mischief.

They did not push on to Innsbrück in a day, as they could easily have done, in one splendid run of a hundred miles over the Brenner Pass; but stopped for the night at Brenner-bad. There was no need to hurry on, since Miss Lee loved beautiful country, said Baron Paul. He had motored over the Brenner before, driving himself, and he knew every inch of the way. There were chateaux and ancient churches and gateways he would like to show Miss Lee, legends of the road he would like to tell her. No doubt Miss Lee believed him; why should she not? But Larry O'Hagan was sceptical.

"He wants the runs to be short, so that he can have the chance to walk about with the girl, and get her to himself," was the thought in the chauffeur's mind. "Besides, the less distance he has to cover before 'things are settled,' the cheaper it will be for him, as then he can make some excuse to stop the tour, and save his sister her fifty francs a day for the car."

The thing to be settled was, of course, an engagement with Miss Lee; Larry saw that clearly now. But as to the motive, he was not quite so clear.

She was pretty—beautiful, Larry had begun to think—and even more fascinating than pretty; but Baron Paul von Waldern was not the man to propose to a girl whose face and charming ways made up her fortune. Still, Mona Lee had neither the air nor the appearance of a great heiress. She had a modest, simple manner, a little shy, like a child brought up in a strict, old-fashioned household. Such dresses of hers as Larry had seen were of the plainest, though they suited her well; and she had brought no maid, nor seemed to want one.

"How glorious it is to have a holiday!" he heard her exclaim, and from that he judged that she had escaped joyously from some distasteful drudgery. If it had not been for Paul's oppressive attentions and Emmilie's approval of them, Larry might have taken Miss Lee for a well-born young governess, resting from her work, and hating the thought of going back to it.

The question, what she was, did not, however, occupy the chauffeur's mind as much as the question, what did she think of the baron and his rapid love-making? They stopped at Brenner-bad; they went on to Innsbrück; and still Larry could not make out the girl's frame of mind.

She was very happy the first day—that was patent. She loved the freedom from some mysterious restraint which made her suffer; she loved the motoring, the glorious mountain country, and the draughts of fresh air which she drew in at every breath. She exclaimed over the beauty of the world, and her joy in it. She was grateful to Emmilie for giving her "such a holiday." She laughed at the baron's rather heavy jokes, and even more at his compliments, but kindly and gleefully.

Next day, she did not laugh quite so often; she was more thoughtful, less talkative, though the magnificent run down to Innsbrück—"like a long toboggan slide," she said—was inspiring. But what did that silence mean? Was Paul making his impression? Was she already beginning to fall in love? Larry noticed a faint wistfulness in her look as Paul helped her down from the car at Innsbrück, and was conscious of a wish to do something for her—what, he did not know; but something.

They stayed at Innsbrück for three days, at a quiet, old-fashioned hotel whose painted, pictorial façade was hardly known to foreign tourists. The first of these days was given up to seeing the town, and the chauffeur, having no instructions, thought that he might as well see it, too, keeping out of the way of his employers. But it is difficult for one sightseer to keep out of the way of other sightseers in Innsbrück. He met the trio in the fine Maria Theresen Strasse, with its background of towering white mountains, and later, in the old Hof Kirche, among

the goodly company of bronze kings and queens of old, great Maximilian's ancestors.

Larry kept himself unobtrusively out of the way, yet Baron Paul—not daring to be openly rude to so cheap, so heaven-sent, a chauffeur—stared as if a servant had no right to tourist privileges. Perhaps Mona Lee saw the stare, and disapproved it, for she came out of her way to join Larry for a moment, leaving the brother and sister to gaze sulkily at the bas-reliefs on Maximilian's tomb.

"Are n't these big bronze gentlemen and ladies delightful creatures?" she asked. "I like even the swaggering, bumptious ones; and the women's bronze embroideries and quaint gloves and head-dresses make up for their dull faces. But Theodoric and Arthur are splendid. I should love to know Theodoric and be kind to him and cheer him up, he seems so sad, as if he'd had bad luck which he had n't deserved."

"I've just been sympathizing with him," answered Larry, smiling. "If a cat may look at a king, I suppose a chauffeur may sympathize with one."

"But you're not an ordinary chauffeur," said the girl quickly. "We're fellow countryman and woman, so I take an interest. Do you sympathize with Theodoric because you, too, have had bad luck, which you did n't deserve?"

"Perhaps I did deserve it," said Larry.

"I don't believe you did," the girl assured him. "I wish——" But what she wished, Larry would never know, because Emmilie and Paul, highly disapproving such a tête-a-tête, made haste to cut it short. Mona darling was called to look at something else, and Laurence the chauffeur was ignored.

Larry had given Tom Petrie "Post Restante, Innsbrück," as an address for answering the telegram sent from Toblach; and an answer came, but there was no news in it. The junior partner in the Majestic and Gryphon Company, Ltd., could not say where the Ransomes were hiding themselves, nor could their friend who had recommended them to the company. But, "It will be all right sooner or later," was Petrie's unfaltering opinion.

Meanwhile there was nothing to do except to go on with the baron's party, no matter how disagreeable the baron's manner might be.

On the second and third days the car was wanted to take the three friends short excursions in the neighborhood. There was a famous old *Schloss* or two to see, and various places of historical interest which Paul always contrived to connect in some way with a brave story of his own ancestry. According to him, the Von Walderns had done more for their country's glory in the past than any other noble family of Austria, still existing. Ever since the tenth century there had been knightly, chivalrous Von Walderns going about serving emperors or kings, and

making bold, successful love to beautiful ladies. "No one can love like a Von Waldern," was an ancient saying at court, according to the last scion of the name. And Mona Lee listened, and smiled; but whenever it chanced that Larry saw one of these smiles, it seemed to him that they became less and less spontaneous.

Towards evening of the third day, having returned from a short run, Larry had left his passengers at their hotel, and was driving the Gryphon into her garage, when a man stepped forward, addressing him in German.

"I would like to speak to you," he said.

Larry stopped the car in her usual place in the garage and got out.

"Speak to me?" he echoed. The man was a meanly-built fox-faced person he had never seen before. "Are you sure you're not mistaking me for some one else?"

The stranger smiled. "If you want to be mistaken for some one else, you ought to get your wheel-caps replaced with others. Look here;" and he took from a greasy pocketbook a slip cut from a newspaper. "It's just a chance that some other motor expert besides myself has n't got hold of this before now. Oh, you can take it in *your* hand if you like—and tear it up if you like. That won't do you any good. I have the address by heart and can answer the advertisement if I choose. Probably I will choose—unless it's made worth my while not to do so."

Larry read the clipping, which, if labelled correctly by its owner, had appeared that morning in an Innsbrück paper. It contained a description of himself and the Gryphon, and offered a reward of four hundred *gulden* to any one sending information of its whereabouts to Herr W. Werner, Hotel Bella Italia, Venice.

"I thought I had seen such a car come out of this garage," explained the man, "and I asked a few questions—nothing to frighten you. I've been waiting for you to get back. They thought you'd be early."

Larry kept a calm face, but he had known more comfortable moments. "Revengeful old brute!" he was saying to himself, as the picture of the Venetian landlord rose in all its bulk before him. "Now, if only the advertisement had been put in by the Ransomes, I should know what to do."

This was the idea that first flashed through his mind; but a second later he was asking himself frankly whether, even in that case, his way would be quite clear. Of course the Ransomes had a right to the car, and to him. If he knew where to find them, it would be his duty to go on the instant. But—the eyes of Mona Lee seemed to look at him with that new, wistful, anxious look that had come into them since the first day of the journey. Could he break away from the baron and the

duchess, leaving the girl to them, never seeing her again, never knowing how her story ended? He could temporize; he could write to the Ransomes, and ask where to meet them; he could make an appointment and invent excuses for delay; he could do almost anything rather than turn his back on Mona Lee, leaving her to go out of his life forever.

But, luckily—yes, *luckily!*—the name of Werner, and not Ransome, was at the end of that dangerous little paragraph. He owed no duty to Herr Werner. And he did *not*—thank goodness!—know where to find the Ransomes. Spider Werner should not reach out a hairy tentacle and claw back the escaped fly, if Larry O'Hagan could help it.

"I'm going to telegraph to Venice," went on the mean-faced stranger, "unless——"

"Unless?"

"You pay me eight hundred *gulden*."

"After which," said Larry quietly, "you would send your telegram just the same, and so stand to win twelve hundred. Quite a pretty little plan."

"I would give you my word of honor not to do that," replied the man.

"Thank you," said Larry. He even smiled, as if he also had a pretty little plan; but for the moment his mind was a blank.

"I must think it over," he went on.

"For how long?"

"A few minutes."

"Very well. I'll wait."

Larry began to flick the dust off the car with a large rag, and whistle. It was the air of the "The Girl I Left Behind Me," which sprang to his lips. No, he could n't—he *would n't*—leave the girl! But what to do? He had no money with which to bribe this wretch, even if he could stoop to bribery—even if he would gain anything by so stooping.

As he flicked the car, and whistled, he saw, to his surprise, the baron, the duchess, and Mona Lee all walking quickly towards the garage. The two ladies had on the thick veils which they wore when motoring, and would have been impossible to recognize had he not known their figures, their dresses, and their escort. He was glad because of Fox-face that they were thus disguised.

"Do you understand French?" he hastily asked, in that language.

The man stared, for answer. His puzzled eyes told that he had not even caught the question.

"What do you say?" he inquired curiously. But Larry had no time to reply. The two ladies and the Baron Paul had come into the garage. Their manner, it seemed to Larry, was strange. Mona and the duchess, standing at a distance, leaned against one another. Mona

fanned herself with her handkerchief, without lifting her thick veil. The two talked together in low voices, their bosoms rising and falling tumultuously. Evidently they had made great haste.

Larry's heart was beating. Had they, too, seen the advertisement, and was he to be put to the question—perhaps discharged?

But the baron's first words reassured him, and never had the Austrian's voice been so agreeable in his ears.

"How soon could you have the car ready for a start?" Paul asked abruptly.

"In ten minutes," said Larry.

The mean-faced man listened with the expression of a hungry fox, but could understand not a word. His eyes snapped, and Larry guessed that he had it in his mind to speak to the new-comer in German, therefore he must be beforehand with him.

"Do not look at him now, but the person with me is a beggar, and not of too good character," said Larry. "It is better not to know German, if he speaks to you; then he will be quiet and let you alone."

"Very good," returned Paul absent-mindedly. "I have other things to attend to, and can't be worried. Something has happened which makes it better that we should go on to Bavaria at once instead of stopping another night in Innsbrück, as we intended. I want to get away—not in ten minutes, but as soon as our packing can be done. My sister will go to the hotel to do it. I will stop here with Miss Lee. Luckily we have not much luggage; the packing won't take long—half an hour at most—and the duchess will come back here with everything in a carriage. You might go out and call her one."

"What, and leave that blackmailer fellow to find out that you know German?" thought Larry quickly. "I will send some one," he said aloud. "I had better use all my time in getting the car ready."

He found a boy employed in the garage, and hurried him off, with the promise of a few coppers. Meanwhile, he was wondering how to get out of the trap into which he had fallen.

"Something has happened." Those were the baron's words; and, whatever it was, Miss Lee had been greatly disturbed by it. She was agitated; her friend Emmilie was soothing her with pattings and purrings in a quiet corner of the garage. And it must have been something rather serious, Larry told himself, as it not only necessitated a sudden start, at a strange and inconvenient hour, but prevented Miss Lee from going back to the hotel to do her own packing. Indeed, it was almost like a flight, and nothing could have suited Larry's private interests better, had he seen his way to escape from Fox-face without an impossible sort of scene which would disgust Mona.

"If only they'd all go, I'd think out some plan to get rid of the blackmailing beast," the young man thought dubiously. But they did

not mean to go; and when the time came for the car's departure the Watcher would not stand by quietly and let his prey escape. He would dart off and send telegrams; but worse than that—since telegrams are a long time on the way—he would shout for the police, and car and chauffeur might be detained.

Fox-face was taking in the scene with his sharp eyes, since his ears were not attuned to French, and his glances darted from Larry to the baron, from the baron to the two veiled ladies. But he said nothing; he still waited, on the chance of obtaining very easily the sum of eight hundred *gulden*; and he had the concentration of a cat who watches a mouse, always ready, though biding its time to spring.

Soon the *einspanner* came for the duchess, and she went away in it, after a last pat on the shoulder of Mona Lee. Paul joined the girl, and talked to her earnestly, in a low voice. She listened, her head bowed, and her hands nervously clasping and unclasping each other. But suddenly she broke away from her companion, and came to the Gryphon, where Larry was busily disposing of a store of petrol.

"I've been standing so long," she explained, "that I find I'm very tired. May I sit in the car till it's time to go?"

It seemed to Larry that her voice trembled a little. He opened the door of the tonneau, and when the girl had got in would have closed it again if Baron Paul had not snatched it from his hand. "I will keep you company, Miss Lee," he said.

Mona did not answer, but—or Larry imagined it—a slight movement of her shoulders showed annoyance.

"Have you made up your mind yet?" gently inquired the Watcher as Larry moved away from the car. "I can't wait much longer."

V

"Yes, I've made up my mind," answered Larry. "You need n't send that telegram."

"You're going to give me the eight hundred *gulden*?"

"Come with me to my hotel. I keep my money there," was Larry's suggestive reply. Then he turned to the baron, asking leave to go and put his things together for the journey.

"You can have five-and-twenty minutes," Paul agreed, with almost too much alacrity. "The duchess is certain not to be back sooner."

As he thus gave his employee leave of absence, Miss Lee pushed up her veil and looked straight at Larry O'Hagan. Being what he was—a hired chauffeur—he was not in her world; yet he was either dreaming or else the girl's eyes were saying, "Don't go and leave me all alone with Baron Paul."

Perhaps he deceived himself; still, he could not abandon her. For a moment he thought of remaining in the garage till the duchess arrived,

no matter what might happen. But Fox-face was growing impatient; and the best that Larry could do was to thank the baron and say he would return in half the time that had been granted. Also, he instructed a young man to busy himself in lubricating the motor, already shining with oil, and not to leave the car until he should come back. A few words spoken aloud to this youth in French unostentatiously informed the baron that attempts at private conversation in that language would be useless. And then Larry hurried off to the modest Meranerhof just round the corner, where he had put up since arriving at Innsbrück. Fox-face kept pace with him, step by step, but neither spoke. The Austrian was perhaps deciding how to dispose of his money when he got it; the Irishman was deciding how to dispose of the Austrian; and by the time they had reached the door of the hotel each one had made a mental arrangement which gave him satisfaction.

"I'm going away as soon as we've settled matters," announced Larry, "so, before taking you to my room, I'll ask for my bill, pay it, and tell them to send the change up-stairs. When I get the money I shall be ready to deal with you."

Fox-face made no objection to this programme, though he listened intently to each word spoken by his companion to the landlord in the dark little *bureau*, and tried to see the denomination of the bank-note for which his victim demanded change. This, by Larry's manoeuvring, he was not able to do, and he followed his guide uncomplainingly up the narrow stairs, no doubt telling himself that, as a waiter might come to the door at any moment, at least he was in no danger of violence.

Larry's room was at the end of a passage on the second floor of the dingy old house with its stone floors and thick walls. It was furnished in the simplest way, but it was neat, and there was a view of distant mountains from the one small window.

"Sit down till the money comes, and I'll begin my packing," said Larry cheerfully.

Fox-face sat down, and Larry bustled about, collecting his things and putting them into the cheap suit-case he had bought at Toblach. There were not many, but the clothing, such as it was, hung in a wardrobe built into the wall and ventilated by a miniature window no bigger than a man's hand. Larry had to bend his head to go in, and Fox-face heard him whistling there, in semi-darkness, until footsteps sounded in the corridor. Then he appeared again, and by the time the expected knock came at the door, the bag was packed and ready to be closed.

An elderly waiter had brought the receipted hotel bill and change on a tray. Larry took both, putting his broad shoulders between Fox-face and the servant, that the Watcher might not see the few scattered coins of silver and copper. He tipped the waiter, put the money in his pocket, and closed the door.

"Now," said he pleasantly, "we'll square our accounts."

His hand was still in his hip pocket, and, drawing it out with a sudden, quick movement, it was a revolver he produced, not a roll of bank-notes.

The Watcher sprang up, his jaw falling, his hand moving towards his hip. "Keep still," said Larry, "and keep your mouth shut. I don't want to hurt you, though a blackmailer like you deserves anything. If you want to get out of this with a whole skin, do exactly as I tell you to do, and nothing else. Now step back into that wardrobe. I'm going to lock you in and leave you there to think of your sins. In with you—I've no time to waste."

Fox-face backed before the revolver, which covered the region of his heart. As he bent his head to avoid the low door frame, Larry gave him an unexpected push and sent him sprawling. Before he could recover himself, or dare cry out, lest a bullet find him through the door, the key was turned on him and withdrawn. The next instant Larry's unloaded and perfectly harmless weapon was in its owner's pocket again, the packed suit-case was in his hand, and the door of the room was being locked on the outside.

As Larry walked with long strides down the corridor, he heard the voice of the prisoner, but it sounded muffled and distant behind thick walls and solid, old-fashioned doors. There were not too many servants in the house, and it would be some time before the cries, when heard, would be traced; and it would be longer still before Fox-face was released, as Larry intended to keep the two keys, and the landlord would not let his locks be broken, when a smith might easily be summoned. Having settled his bill, Larry was free to walk out of the hotel with his luggage, which he did, as quietly as if his packing had been conducted without incident. It was only when he reached the corner that he ventured to hurry, and then he made up for lost time, since every minute counted.

The chances were that the Watcher would remain in undisturbed possession of his wardrobe, until the chambermaid was sent to change the bed linen, which would be in an hour at latest, for it was the beginning of the "high season," and every room was in request. At worst for himself, Fox-face was in no danger; but at worst for Larry, the man might be released prematurely: and before that misfortune the Gryphon and her chauffeur must be out of Innsbrück.

"In for a penny, in for a pound," was the air he whistled on his swift way back to the garage; but he whistled ruefully, and it seemed to him that the path of the motor thief was more difficult than any *pavé* he had yet encountered.

He had been given twenty-five minutes, and he had taken fifteen. At the garage all was as he had left it—so far as the eye could see.

Mona and Baron Paul sat in the car. Paul was talking; Mona was listening; the young man commanded to lubricate was lubricating. Nothing could have happened. And yet—either Larry's nerves were sensitive or there was a tingle of electricity in the air.

Paul had been speaking English, an accomplishment which Larry had not known that he possessed; so, after all, the lubricating had been in vain; and Mona looked anxious. Was she merely eager to get off, or had Baron Paul been making her uncomfortable? Baron Paul's chauffeur was impertinent enough to want to know.

Hardly had he stowed away his luggage, when the duchess arrived with that of the three passengers.

"Well?" asked Mona in a strained voice.

"*I think* it is well," answered her friend.

"You saw him again?"

"Yes, but at a distance. Standing in front of the Tirolerhof."

"How thankful I am we did n't stop there!"

"Ah, Paul and I are too wise protectors for that! Mona is safe with us, is n't she?"

"I have been talking to her about that while you were gone," Paul answered. "I have proposed—a plan."

"Ah, it is sure to be a good one! You are so clever, my Paulchen. Have you consented to the plan, dearest Mona?"

"I—I can't consent," faltered the girl. "But don't let us talk of it now. Let us get off as soon as we can. And if we have to go five miles out of our way, don't let us pass the Tirolerhof."

"Or the Meranerhof," echoed Larry, under his breath, as he fastened on the last piece of luggage, and sprang to start the car.

It had been in his mind to wire Tom Petrie each time he changed his address, so that the Phantoms, if they materialized, need not be tortured by suspense as to the fate of the rescued Gryphon. But even if he had had time to spare before leaving Innsbrück, he would not have kept to this plan. For the first time his own interests—or Mona's Lee's, which were beginning to mean to him more than his own—clashed with those of his unknown employers, and crushed them into insignificance. For the first time he did not want to know where the Ransomes were; he did not want the Ransomes to know where he was.

Mona Lee was in trouble. She had had a shock, and for some reason she was desperately anxious to turn her back on Innsbrück. Even had a telegram from Major Ransome been handed to Larry O'Hagan at the moment of starting, ordering him to bring the Gryphon instantly to some place specified, he would have disobeyed the summons. The car was the Ransomes' car, and he had snatched it from too eager creditors for their sakes and not for his own. But now no call from them could have caused him to desert Mona Lee, who had even less

right to the car than had the injured Herr Werner. When he drove out of the garage at Mestre, Larry had the conscience of a misjudged angel. But dashing away from the garage at Innsbrück, he had the conscience of a highwayman.

Let the Ransomes rage. Mona Lee needed him, and until she needed him no longer, he and she and the Gryphon, with its other passengers, would disappear into space.

VI

ALREADY the day was fading into dusk when the Gryphon slipped stealthily out of Innsbrück, dodging main streets and twisting through by-ways, to leap at last into the valley of the Inn.

It was the mysterious "something" that had happened, which necessitated this twilight flitting; and it stirred Larry to some emotion deeper than curiosity that Mona Lee should be concerned in the mystery. The glory of the full moon, as it rose over the rocky height of the Martinswand and silvered the blue dusk, thrilled him like the music of a church organ heard at night. His situation, with all its irritating and sordid difficulties, suddenly attained in his eyes the height of a romantic adventure. He regretted nothing in the past, dreaded nothing in the future. Of course it was impossible that he and this girl with the wonderful eyes should ever be anything to each other, or that she would think of the baron's hired chauffeur in any personal way; but he knew that he loved her, and because she was near him he was happy—just for to-night.

By this time Fox-face had no doubt been let out of prison, and had done all the mischief he could do. But, Larry asked himself, what could it amount to? Before long, the car would have passed over the frontier into Germany, and would be moving about from day to day among small towns where the inhabitants did not know one make of automobile from another, even if such an advertisement as had appeared in Innsbrück should find its way into their newspapers. In any case, Herr Werner had no rights over the Gryphon; and now that the passengers in the car as well as the chauffeur had apparently something to run away from, Larry might hope that he was for the moment as necessary to Baron Paul as was Baron Paul to him.

Swiftly the Gryphon ran through the flower-carpeted valley, where was no sound save the purr of her engine and the song of the river. Nobody spoke much in the car, and even the baron was taciturn. Not once did Mona laugh happily, or exclaim in admiration, though the snow-capped mountains were like domes and pinnacles of pearl floating in azure light, and the rippling water of the Inn was spangled with flashing silver.

At the quaint little town of Telfs they had begun to mount; and,

having reached the top of the Col, high above the singing of the river, and the sweet scents of new-cut grass and growing wild flowers, the car swooped suddenly down a road looped along the mountain-side, a road of quick turns and descents so steep that here and there the car seemed to be sliding down a wall. The start had been made so late that, once well outside Innsbrück, they had met few vehicles, and since Telfs (where Larry had lit his lamps) none at all. He was coasting down slope after slope, tooting the horn perfunctorily at each curve, when, rounding a sharp corner, he came upon a belated cart, loaded heavily with wood. A peasant, roused from a comfortable doze on his rug of sacking, sat up and shouted, wildly gathering in his reins. The horse had been plodding stolidly along on the wrong side of the road, and as his master slept the horn of the automobile had sounded its warning in vain. Larry, with quick presence of mind and unerring skill, avoided a collision, and swept past the cart with a few inches of the steep road to spare; but a yell from behind caused him to put on the brakes and instantly slow down the car.

One look thrown over his shoulder showed him the horse rearing and plunging, backing the heavy wagon dangerously near the precipice, while the driver struggled to extricate himself from his sacking and jump out.

"Don't stop!" cried the baron. "It was the fool's own fault, but we can't prove that, and he may make us trouble. Push on—push on, I tell you! We can't risk anything for a stupid peasant."

But Larry did not push on. Instead of obeying, he stopped the motor, and sprang out into the road. "Only brutes would go on and leave the poor wretch to be killed!" he exclaimed indignantly. Running back, he seized the frantic horse by the bridle, and tried to drag it to safety. But the heavy cart had slipped down the crown of the road, and the great weight of piled wood was drawing it nearer and nearer to the precipice. The carter, rolled in a tangle of sacking, and perhaps half drunk, was now as mad with fear as the terrified horse, which he lashed fiercely with his whip. In vain the lashings; in vain the exertion of Larry's strength. If he let go the animal's head, it would instantly back the cart over the precipice; but, pull as he might, the wagon was still yielding inch by inch.

"Out with you, before he has you over the cliff!" he yelled to the driver. "Fall out—if you can't get out in any other way—and put a stone behind the wheel. Quick, or you'll be too late!"

The man did not hear, or was too dazed to understand, and Larry was making his last desperate effort when suddenly he felt the strain relax. The sliding wheels were arrested; the cart held firm, on the brink of the precipice; and, relieved of the weight at its back, the horse ceased to plunge so perilously. A few soothing words and pats on the

shoulder, and it was ready to obey the hand on its bridle. A great tug or two, and Larry had pulled the quivering beast up the hill, thus righting the loaded wagon and ending the danger.

"Now go on your way, and keep to your right side after this," he advised the carter. "Be thankful you're not in the next world."

"No thanks to you," called the peasant brutally. "If it had n't been for you, there'd have been no accident. I wish you and your cursed automobile had gone over the mountain-side."

Larry, whose shin was aching from the kick of an iron-shod hoof, laughed rather bitterly as he turned away to go back to the car, there perhaps to receive another rebuff. But, thus turning, he came face to face with Mona Lee, who was standing in the road, her hands clasped against her breast. "Thank Heaven you're safe!" she panted. "I thought for a moment you would all go over the cliff together."

"A miracle saved the horse and cart," said Larry. And then the bright moonlight showed him a large stone placed against a small, jagged point of rock on the edge of the precipice.

"By Jove!" he exclaimed. "That's what held the wheel back. I did n't know it was there."

"I ran and got it and put it there," said Mona, her voice trembling suspiciously, now that all danger was ended.

"You!" echoed Larry. "You might have been knocked down by the cart and dashed over the cliff."

"I did n't care," the girl answered. "It was the only thing to be done, and—no one else would do it. You were so brave, you inspired me."

"You are the pluckiest girl I ever saw," said Larry.

"You forget yourself, Laurence," cut in Baron Paul sharply. "That is not the way for a chauffeur to speak to a lady, no matter how brave she may be. If Miss Lee had been killed, it would have been your fault for presuming to disobey my orders."

Quick as light, Mona turned on him. So insignificant had he seemed in this situation, that neither had seen him, though he stood close behind Mona and facing Larry.

"Baron," the girl flashed at him with the keenness of a knife-blade, "allow me to judge if I am addressed properly. I thank you for your praise of me, Mr. Laurence, which is the more valuable because you are the pluckiest man I ever saw. And if you had obeyed the baron's orders I should have despised you, instead of being proud that we're both Irish."

Paul stepped back as if she had boxed his ears, and Larry could see that the blood streamed up to his forehead, receding slowly, to leave him livid in the moonlight. He bit his lip, thus crushing back the angry words that must have burned his tongue, and Larry almost

respected the man's self-restraint as he bowed in stiff, soldierly fashion, standing aside to let Mona pass to the car.

"It was for your sake that I wished to hurry on, no matter what happened to others," he said, in a tone of suppressed rage which might pass for reproach. "When you are in danger I think of nothing else. Perhaps you are ready to go now?"

Without a word, Mona went past him, and climbed into her place before he had time to help her.

"Start the motor and get on as quickly as you can," directed Baron Paul, for the pleasure of giving a sharp order to his chauffeur, though already Larry had touched the starting handle. Though tingling with joy at the girl's praise, and her defense of him, Larry feared the result of the incident. His car was necessary to the baron, it was true; still, the man's pride had been touched to the quick, and Larry knew well that, if Paul could drive the Gryphon, he would delight in seeing the chauffeur struck by lightning or killed in any other sudden, non-contagious way, at this moment. The good-looking Austrian was passionate, conceited, and vindictive if his vanity were wounded, or so Larry judged him: and he would writhe if forced to keep on a chauffeur whose courage and whose rights as a gentleman had been upheld by a girl at his expense.

"If the baron and his sister can think of any other way out of their difficulties," Larry thought, as he drove on, "they'll send me packing to-morrow."

Silence unbroken reigned in the car until the beginning of the Fern Pass was reached. There, as if to mark the opening of the way, stood a charming little inn, under an arbor of trees, and looking down upon twin lakes, blue as forget-me-nots even in the moonlight.

"We will stop here for food," the baron announced shortly, to his chauffeur.

It was late, but if Larry were hungry, he did not know it. The others went into the hotel, but the chauffeur remained outside with his car, and ate *zwieback* and drank thin, white wine of the country at one of the small tables ranged before the door.

The three passengers were away for some time—a longer time than seemed necessary to Larry, since they were professedly eager to push on. Three-quarters of an hour passed; then an hour; but at last Baron Paul von Waldern came out alone.

"I wish to speak to you," he said.

Larry had been pacing up and down in the moonlight, smoking a cigarette. He stopped, the cigarette in his hand.

"Throw that away when you talk to me," the baron ordered imperiously. "You do not understand your position."

Larry retained his cigarette, and puffed at it once, to keep it alight

before answering. "I think I do understand my position, and yours, too," he said.

"You are insolent!" exclaimed Baron Paul von Waldern. "But after all, what does it matter? Ladies are near. Because of them, and lest they should be disturbed, I shall let you off more lightly than you deserve, after your behavior. You have had your money by the day, at the end of each day, as it fell due. Here are your wages up to to-night, and I discharge you now at a moment's notice, as I have every right to do after your disobedience and impertinence."

Larry's heart grew chill, in all the heat of his anger. It was as he had feared. He was to lose the girl. He was to be denied another sight of her.

They were standing by the car, and Paul flung on the driver's seat a little folded wad of paper which might contain a few gold coins. Larry took no notice of it. He had not many shillings, but money was the last thing he thought of now—especially Von Waldern money.

His first impulse was to start the Gryphon at once, and drive off in her, without a word, without turning round; but he had forgotten his passengers' luggage, and the fact that it had not been taken down. Remembering, his next idea was to unload it as quickly as possible; but as his eyes fell on the modest dressing-bag and small box which were Mona's, his heart contracted.

Only this afternoon her eyes had said to him—or he had fancied it—"Don't leave me alone with Baron Paul." Since then, a thing had happened which might make the girl less partial to Paul's society than she had been. As for the duchess, she was her brother's ally, and would not hesitate to sacrifice her friend for him. Indeed, all Larry knew or guessed of the circumstances led him to believe that the friend had been brought upon the scene solely for the brother's sake. They were both Austrians, in their own country. Mona Lee was a foreigner, in a strange land which she had never visited before. She was in some difficulty or trouble, and had no protection here, save theirs. She was even at their mercy, so far as a girl of so much pluck and character could be at the mercy of others. What if she did not know that the man she had claimed as her "countryman" was being sent away, and what if she should feel herself deserted when she found him gone with the Gryphon in which she had so delighted?

Larry was half ashamed of this thought, lest it should spring from a flicker of vanity, scotched, not killed, by all his misfortunes. The girl was with friends. He was only their chauffeur, though she had been kind to him. Nothing could alter that; and yet the thought would not go.

What if this sending away the car were the result of a hasty plan made by brother and sister, with their heads together in secret conclave?

What if this lonely, though charming spot in the mountains had seemed to them especially promising now that Mona wished to escape from some one at Innsbrück? What if they wished to prevent her from escaping, unless she would consent to make them her Providence?

Larry, still without speaking, took down the luggage of Miss Mona Lee, the luggage of the Duchess de Rocheverte, and the luggage of the Baron Paul von Waldern. Then he seated himself in a chair by the table he had lately left, and lighted another cigarette from his case.

"I have told you to go. Why don't you go?" inquired the baron.

"You told me that you no longer wanted to engage me and my car," said Larry. "Having told me that, you have forfeited the right to tell me anything more. I am my own master now, and for the present I prefer remaining here to going further."

"I don't intend to be persecuted by a discharged servant, I warn you!" exclaimed the baron, giving way to his full fury, since he had now nothing to gain by being civil to the cheap chauffeur.

"Really?" said Larry; and he laughed. "If I annoy you, why don't you go indoors?"

The Austrian uttered a German word which is appalling on its native heath, though it might be used in drawing-rooms in England. As it burst from him, he took a step forward as if to strike the other. But as Larry, remaining seated, looked up at him calmly, a second thought arrested him before it was too late. He turned his back upon his late chauffeur and walked into the house.

VII

LARRY looked at his watch, which was a valuable one, and capable of being used in certain emergencies for other purposes than to tell the time. He might be glad by and by to put it to such uses, as he told himself now with a grim smile; but at the moment it was the hour of which he thought.

It was half past nine, and the only reasonable conclusion was that the baron and the two ladies intended to stop here for the night. In that case, the ladies would probably not appear again, and it would be useless to wait in the cold moonlight, hoping to speak with one of them. Still, Larry lingered, and made no preparations for going on, or for putting up the Gryphon, although he had now extinguished her lamps. If Miss Lee should come out, he wanted to be on the spot to see her.

"Do you wish for anything more, sir?" asked a hovering waiter, who had come out from the inn.

"Thank you, no," Larry replied absent-mindedly.

"The *patron* will be glad to know, sir, if you will remain in the hotel for the night?"

This brought Larry to himself.

"If I decide to stop, have you a place for my car?"

"We have a place that would do very well, sir."

"Can you tell me if Baron von Waldern and the ladies are staying all night?" Larry laid a *gulden* on the table.

"I think they have not settled yet. They are still in the room where they dined, and I heard them discussing plans as I waited upon them. There is some idea that, if the *patron* can get them a carriage, they will go on to-night to Füssen."

"You might let me know what is finally decided," said Larry as the waiter, having pocketed the *gulden* (little guessing how few there were where it came from), picked up the tray containing wine bottle, glass, and plate.

"So that's the idea, is it?" Larry repeated to himself, when he was once more alone in the moonlight. "If I go, the baron will stay. If I stay, he will go. Well, if his decision depends on mine, he'll have some difficulty in making it, for I shall let my movements depend on his."

Larry was conscious that, if he chose to dwell upon it, a lively element of comedy now leavened the situation; but he was in love, and he was miserable, therefore his sense of humor sat in darkness and would not see.

Restless and uneasy, not sure whether he were only a fool, or the loyal servant of a lady, he left his place by the table, and strolled gloomily about, never going quite out of sight from the hotel.

The road which now became the Fern Pass was like the road to Eden. Arched over with trees, moonlight and shadow paved it with black and white marble. The air smelled of young leaves, new mown grass, and lilac blossoms. What a night for lovers, if they were happy lovers! thought Larry, throwing himself on a shadowed mound of velvet moss, where from under low-hanging tree-branches he could look down on a moonlit mirror of water.

There was no sound here except the occasional rustle and stir of a bird in its hidden nest overhead, until suddenly came footsteps and voices. Looking up, Larry saw Mona Lee and the duchess visible for a moment in a white space of moonlight, then engulfed in shadow, though they were coming towards him, bareheaded, the arm of the duchess round Mona's waist.

"My darling, it's the one way out of it, and you were made for each other," said Emmilie. "Trust me; you know nothing of love. You're a child. But he worships you, and would soon teach you to love him."

"I may not know much, but I've thought a good deal," answered Mona. "I'm most awfully sorry to grieve you, Emmie, or hurt your brother's feelings. He's very handsome, and perhaps if I were Austrian

I should fall in love with him; but I'm Irish and English, and—I'm sure we *were n't* made for each other."

"You would have one of the oldest titles in Austria, and one of the most beautiful castles in the world. My brother has twenty-four quarterings, and you would be a *persona grata* at court."

"I don't think I care much about titles and castles," said Mona.

"That's nonsense. Of course you care. All normal women care. Dearest child, you know what the alternative is if you don't promise to marry my brother, who adores you."

"I can't be forced into either thing."

"*Les convenances* will force you. You can't go on as you are now, spending every hour in poor Paul's society, if you're determined to refuse him in the end. It would be too cruel."

"I know—oh, I know! And I want to go away. How could I dream things would turn out like this? I've only known your brother a few days."

"The men of my family always fall in love at first sight."

"I wish they did n't, then. Oh, Emmilie, I'm horribly sorry about everything, but could n't you take me away?"

"My dear, it's impossible. I had to promise my husband that I would go straight to my brother, and never leave Paul till Gilbert was able to come for me; otherwise I should n't have been allowed to leave home in Gilbert's absence."

Long ago Larry had jumped up and had started to walk towards the two ladies, along the moonlight dappled road; but, though even in this deeply-shadowed spot they must have noticed a moving figure, they continued their conversation. If he had not seen them for an instant in full moonlight, however, he could not have recognized their faces or figures, in this dusky tunnel of branches; therefore it was not to be expected that they should recognize him. They were speaking in English, and who in this isolated place could understand a word they were saying?

It was only when he was close upon them, his cap in his hand as he walked, that they woke from their self-absorption and noticed the man who approached. At last they started slightly, and drew closer together, perhaps not even then sure of his identity.

"Let us go back," said the duchess, trying to turn her companion round.

"Why, it's Mr. Laurence!" exclaimed Mona. "I thought you had gone away." There was surprise and—it seemed to Larry—something like resentment in her tone.

"Then, you can't have seen the car," said Larry, pausing as she paused, though the duchess urged her on, "or you would have guessed that I was n't far off."

"It's not in front of the hotel."

"I pushed her a little out of the way after the baron gave me my discharge and my plans became rather vague."

"Come, Mona; you must come. It's late. Paul would n't like us to be here without him," insisted Emmilie.

But the girl still resisted. "Gave you your discharge!" she echoed. "Why, he told us—me—that you had simply refused to go on, after what happened this evening, and that you'd left us all in the lurch. He's with the landlord now, arranging about a carriage and horses."

"You believed that I would do a thing like that?" the reproach was wrung from Larry.

"I—it did n't seem like you. Yet you had a right to be angry. I thought the baron——"

"He discharged me at a moment's notice. Those were his own words."

"Mona," cried the duchess, "how can you stand here and listen while a—a servant calumniates my brother? Who ever took a servant's word against a gentleman?"

"You know very well that Mr. Laurence is a gentleman," said Mona. "And because he was accused of doing what would n't have been worthy of him to do, he shall have the chance of explaining. I did think it horribly unkind of you to go off and leave us here on the mountain, when you must have guessed—you must have heard—how anxious I—we were to get on."

"That is why I refused to go when the baron discharged me," replied Larry. "I could n't force him to keep me in his service, but I would n't leave this place until I was sure that—that it was the wish of everybody not to travel with me."

"You refused to leave? Oh, thank you for that! It was nice and—*Irish* of you."

"I am going indoors at once," said the Duchess de Rocheverte icily, though her voice trembled with rage. "I will not stay here another instant to hear lies against my brother; and unless you come with me, Mona, I shall consider that you are no longer my friend. As for you, sir, I speak for us all. You may take it from me that we do not want to see either you or your car again."

"I shall not leave him like that!" cried Mona, flashing into anger, and caring for nothing except her own injured sense of justice. "Your brother has behaved abominably. If it had not been for Mr. Laurence refusing to obey him to-night, we should have been murderers. I can never, never feel the same towards the baron again."

"Very well. Go your own way, then. I wash my hands of you," exclaimed the duchess, throwing out her hands in a magnificent gesture

of indignation. She swept towards the hotel, her head held high; and Mona was left alone with Larry.

"Miss Lee, you have been more than good to me," he stammered, "and I can't express what I feel for you" (it was true he could not), "but you mustn't alienate your only friend here. Just let me say good-by to you, and then follow her——"

"I can't," broke in Mona. "Did n't you hear her tell me to go my own way? Did n't you hear her say that she 'washed her hands of me'?"

"She did n't mean it," Larry assured her, though in his heart he thought the duchess a minx and a vixen, and a defense of her stuck in his throat. "She's angry with me, naturally, and——"

"She's still angrier with me," the girl interrupted again. "You—you won't think it very strange and horrid of me to talk with you about such things, will you?—because we're both from the same country and in a foreign land. But—did you happen to hear any of the things Emmilie and I were saying to each other just before you came up?"

"I came up because I did n't want to hear things not meant for my ears," answered Larry. "However, I could n't help catching a few words."

"Then you know——"

"Very little more than I had already seen. Even chauffeurs do see things——"

"As if you were like other chauffeurs!"

"What makes you think I'm different?"

"You're a gentleman."

"Gentlemen chauffeurs are thick as blackberries nowadays. That's what becomes of half the young men who fail in their exams for the army."

"You are not the kind of man to fail in anything you set out to do."

"I'm worse than a failure. I'm almost a fraud," said Larry bitterly.

"I don't believe that, Mr. Laurence."

"My name is n't Laurence—at least, it is n't my surname," Larry went on, spurred to a terrible frankness.

"For the matter of that, my name is n't Lee," said Mona. "Now, I suppose, if I could see your face, I should see you looking very surprised—and shocked."

Larry laughed. "'Shocked' seems a strange word to use in connection with an angel. Do you mind my calling you an angel?"

"I like it," said Mona, "because I know I'm not one. I'm not sure I'm not suffering from remorse. But, anyhow, if I've done

wrong, I'm being punished. I don't know what's going to become of me. Oh, I *am* glad you have n't gone! I felt so abandoned—among foreigners. I should like to tell you a few things and ask your advice. Will you give it me?"

Would he give it to her? If he had had a kingdom, he would joyfully have given her, not half, but all, of that.

"There's nothing I would n't do for you," he said, in a voice that was rather choked; because it is difficult for a man who is hopelessly in love with a girl to say exactly the right thing, and not too much.

"Well, I'm in the most horrible scrape," went on Mona, "and although I'm quite old—I've had my twentieth birthday—I've always been kept back so, never being allowed to leave school, that I have n't had enough experience of the world to know what I ought to do to get out of the scrape."

"It's the duchess's business to get you out of it," said Larry. "She's your chaperon."

"I'm afraid it's she who has got me into it," sighed Mona, "though of course it's partly my own fault. I was awfully unhappy, because I was going to be forced to live with very uncongenial people, whom I don't like; and, besides, there was a perfectly *horrid* young man whom I knew they wanted me to marry. Of course they could n't make me do it—I'm not so childish as that. But, as he is always with them, my life could be made very disagreeable. I hated the thought of it, and one day Emmilie—who used to be in my school until she married, three years ago—came to see me. She said if she were in my place she'd slip off and hide somewhere till she was of age, as I did n't owe these guardians of mine any love or gratitude, but rather the other way round. When I asked, where could I hide, she invited me to stop with her; and she offered to arrange everything so that I might escape without any one being able to find me. I'd always admired Emmilie, who used to be very nice to me when I was one of the little girls and she was one of the big ones at school. I thought it would be tremendously exciting to run away and great fun to be with her; but she did n't tell me then that she was expecting to stay with her brother in Austria. I supposed we were going to be in her own home. When I did hear her real plans, it was too late for me to draw back, even if I'd wanted to; but I did n't want to. She described her brother, and his castle where we were to stay, and they both seemed ideal.

"I did n't even mind very much when we got to Toblach, and the baron met us with the news that his chateau was being repaired. He said he'd sent for his motor-car, and that he'd take us for a tour. Afterwards, perhaps, Schloss Waldberg might be ready. It all sounded too delightful, though I was a little frightened, because my guardians

might be not so very far away. However, Emmilie and her brother both said we would n't go anywhere near them; and as I've never done any motoring before, I was enchanted with everything.

"But that was just at first. Of course I'd never had a chance to meet any young men, except the horrid one I told you about who was sent to my school to see me, bringing presents from his people. For a day or two I did n't quite know what to make of Emmilie's brother, but soon—soon I saw—it's difficult to explain, is n't it?"

"Don't trouble to explain. I saw, too; and I guessed you did n't like it," said Larry.

"I hated it. I suppose it's natural to foreign men to pay girls stupid compliments every minute, and that sort of thing; but it is n't my way to like them. And then—to-day in Innsbrück, after we'd got back from our excursion, we were walking when on the other side of the road, near one of the big hotels, I saw the very last person on earth I wanted to see—the man I'd run away from. I hoped he did n't see me, and I instantly let down my thick veil; but I could n't be sure he had n't. And, besides, why was he in Innsbrück, if he had n't discovered that I was there? I felt his people must have found out, somehow, and the one thing I wanted was to get away as quickly as I could.

"That was why we flew to the garage in such a hurry, and asked you to get the car ready to start at once. Already Baron Paul had—had proposed. So stupid—when he hardly knew me. It was the night before; and when I said 'no,' he promised to be good and not bother me; otherwise I could n't stay on with his sister. But while we were in the garage they told me that if I did n't want to be caught and punished like a child, I had better marry Paul immediately, as soon as the wedding could be arranged."

"I thought that was what they were saying!" Larry broke out.

"Oh, did you? And was that why you told the fat white youth to oil the car when you had to go out, and I was alone with Baron Paul?"

"Yes. But I would n't have gone if it had n't been absolutely necessary."

"Of course you had to pack."

"I had to lock a brute of a man into a cupboard and leave him there, or else he would have tried to prevent my taking the car out of Innsbrück."

"How extraordinary!"

"It was a bit quaint. But never mind me and my affairs. It is yours I care about."

"Yet you must have been having anxieties, too."

"They were nothing."

Rather than seem curious, she went on: "Well, it seemed ages before you got back. I began to realize that I should n't be able to go

on as I had been going, for I *could n't* marry Baron Paul. It would have been almost as bad—though not quite—as marrying the other one. But I did hope to make Emmilie see things in my way; and I thought as she'd advised me to leave everything, she might leave her brother, and see me through."

"And so she will—so she must," said Larry.

"No. And even if she would, I'd refuse to have her. She's been plotting and scheming with Baron Paul. Always, she has meant this. She does n't care for me, really—I see that now. She will sacrifice me for her brother, in spite of all her promises. Do advise me what to do. I can't stay with Emmilie. I won't live with my guardians. I can't go back to school, for if I did they would come and take me out. And I've no near relations, no intimate friends except the girls at school."

"You must have a chaperon," Larry insisted. "I think you will have to stay with the Duchess de Rocheverte until some one—some nice, kind old lady, perhaps—can be found to look after you. In common decency, the baron can't persecute you when he understands your position."

"Do you know, I think the more he understands, the more he'll try to persecute," the girl said, sighing. "But I suppose you must be right. Only, how can I make it up with Emmilie in spite of all?"

"It is for her to be ashamed, not you," Larry tried to console her, though his heart was sad. "Don't delay. The sooner it's over, the better."

"Good-by, then, and thank you. You have been very good."

"Good?" He would not trust himself to say more.

She put out her hand and he held it tightly for an instant. When he was sure of himself again, he spoke. "I won't leave this, you know, until I'm sure you're all right, because—somehow—I might be of use. Good-by."

She moved away from him, slowly, and he let her go, though it was all he could do to keep from calling her back, from telling her how he loved her, how the light of his life would vanish with her. So he stood, watching the tall, girlish figure until it disappeared.

She called Baron Paul's love "a stupidity," because he had known her for only a few days. What would she say if she could read the heart of the chauffeur, her "countryman," from whom she had asked "good advice"?

VIII

HARDLY five minutes had passed, and—because to-night seemed the end of all things beautiful—Larry had not begun to think what he would do to-morrow, when Mona's voice called him:

"Mr. Laurence—Mr. Laurence!"

He could not see her, but the call came from the direction of the hotel, and he obeyed the summons quickly. His thought was that he would find her with the Duchess de Rocheverte—that she and Emmilie would have "kissed again with tears."

"I hope to heaven she is n't going to make the duchess apologize to me!" he said to himself. "I could n't stand that."

But no duchess was visible. The girl was alone, waiting for him in a silver pool of moonlight, and her face was grave and pale. Her shyness and girlish hesitation were gone now, all suddenly. "They have left me here!" she said.

"Impossible!" cried Larry.

"An hour ago I should have thought so, too. But they have done it. The baron was bargaining for a carriage when Emmilie and I came out, long ago. It must have been ready when she went back to him, furious with me. And you and I were talking very earnestly, or we should have heard the roll of their wheels as they drove off."

"They left no message?"

"Oh, yes, they left a message. It was that they were going to Füssen, where I could follow them in another carriage if I chose; but that if I did n't come immediately it would be too late, as they would soon be leaving for Toblach by train."

"The brutes!"

"They thought I would have to follow—that I was at their mercy. People like that judge others by themselves."

"They deserve to be—I dare n't say what they deserve."

He was losing his head now, and with a look from her eyes, he lost it completely. As her lashes lifted, two big tears splashed over her pale cheeks, and made him forget everything except his love.

"I'm glad you—did n't desert me!" she half sobbed.

"Desert you!" he echoed. "Don't you know—don't you see—that there's nothing in the world for me except you? I'm a fool—worse, I'm a beast—to tell you so, but I——"

"A beast, to tell me that—that you *care* a little?"

"I love you—I love you!" he stammered. "Now go quickly into the house, and leave me. Let the landlady know exactly what's happened. Put yourself in her care."

"I won't leave you—yet," said the girl softly. "Not till I tell you that I love you, too."

"My darling! It can't be."

"But I do. It seemed ridiculous that the baron should begin to say such things so soon; but—*we're* different, are n't we? Oh, I was so miserable, and now I'm so happy! Nothing can harm me, since you really love me."

"My sweet!" he said. "Poor innocent child. You don't even know my name."

"I know that you are *you*. And I think I fell in love with you that first night when you came into Emmilie's sitting-room in the hotel at Toblach."

"I know I fell in love with you as I drove up to the door of the hotel and saw you standing on the steps. But, my dearest one, I had no right to fall in love, still less to speak to you of love. I'm down, very far down, in the world."

"So am I," said Mona. "And I'm all alone in it, except for you. I believe now that we were meant for each other, else we should n't have *known* so soon."

"But I'm practically penniless, for the moment, and I've a hideous idea that you're rich. I could n't take you if you were rich——"

"Oh, I'm not. I'm horribly poor. I've hardly anything except a little jewelry."

"Thank Heaven for that! Then, darling, if you love me, and if you can trust me after I've told you all about myself, there might be a way out of the difficulty."

"There's no 'if.' Tell me the way."

"Would you—marry me?"

"Oh, I should love to!" cried Mona.

"At least, I could protect you; and though I'm in a hole now, I shall get out of it. I shall get something better than 'shuvering' to do, and we won't starve. Besides, some day there'll be money and a place in Ireland coming to me."

"Perhaps I shall have money *some* day, too," Mona admitted, as if reluctantly. "But not too much—oh, don't be afraid of that. I'm so happy. And I'm so glad Emmilie has gone. If she had n't, maybe you would n't have told me."

"It was killing me not to," he said. Then she looked at him again, but this time with a smile even more moving than her tears; and, drawing her into the shadow, he took her in his arms.

By and by he told her things about himself, beginning with his name, and going on to the trouble in the regiment, which, until now, he thought had wrecked his life. But if it had not happened, he would never have met her, because—and then he came to the history of his adventure in Venice.

At first she broke in upon him here and there in the story. She assured Larry that he was dearer than ever for what he had suffered, bravely, sacrificing himself for others. She thought that, instead of going down into darkness, he ought to have been led up to the height of a blazing pinnacle. For her, he was a hero. What else mattered?

And so there were pauses in the history, pauses like flashes of light for Larry. But at last she let him come to the chapter which opened with the name of Ransome. After that beginning, she was very still. Her hand in his, she listened in silence, breaking in no more; and because her way of hearing him had been so different at first, Larry was chilled with sudden fear that her approval of his conduct was changed into contempt.

"Did I do wrong to take the Gryphon?" he asked her, almost timidly.

"No," she said; "no. You did the only thing, it seems to me."

"And afterwards? Do you think I had no right to hire myself out with a car that was n't mine?"

"Oh, no. What else *could* you do, when you were obliged to have money, or you could n't have kept the car for its owners?"

"It was the only way that occurred to me; but perhaps I might have hit on something else if I'd taken more time to think."

"It seemed like Fate—bringing us together," she said. But she spoke slowly, dreamily, as if only half herself were engaged in the thought.

"And the man I locked up? That affair does n't make you think me a brute?"

"He was what they call a blackmailer, was n't he? And you knew that I wanted to get away from Innsbrück. I'm glad you did it. I'm glad of *everything* you did, that brought you to where we are now—together."

"Yet something must be wrong. You've changed in the last ten minutes."

"Not towards you."

"You're sure?"

"Oh, very sure!"

"Then why are you different?"

"I'm thinking. You've told me all about yourself, and—I haven't even told you my real name. I don't want to tell it—yet."

Larry laughed. "You'd hardly believe me, but I'd forgotten. You're Mona, are n't you?"

"Yes; but——"

"And you've promised to be Mona O'Hagan as soon as possible. That's the important thing to me. Let the rest go, till you want to talk of it. Good heavens! if you knew what I suffered when I thought you were some great heiress, and that I must n't even think of you from afar!"

"What a contrast between you and Baron Paul! He—hoped I was an heiress."

"He knew you were beautiful, and so do I."

"I shall begin to be beautiful, since I'm happy. Dearest, if anything should part us now!"

"Nothing shall," said Larry. Nevertheless, he thought of one or two uncomfortable things that might happen.

IX

"We *must* get it back in some way," said the duchess.

She meant the money spent upon the girl; and she said it when she and Paul had given up hoping that the girl would be frightened into following them.

They had each staked something, but Emmilie's stakes had been in solid cash. She had been sure that such a *coup d'état* as hers would bring the girl to heel; and the brother and sister had not driven off towards Füssen in one carriage without ascertaining that there would be another at the service of the young lady, if required.

Of course it would be required. Mona could not stay alone on top of the Fern Pass; still less could she stay in the society of the discharged chauffeur, whose cause she had so ridiculously championed. She would follow, and beg Emmilie's pardon for her exasperating conduct. Then Emmilie would forgive her, and she should have another chance to behave like a sensible girl—the behavior of a sensible girl being to fall in love with a handsome and eligible young Austrian baron. Indeed—and this must be delicately suggested to the culprit—Paul would be showing true chivalry in overlooking such an escapade, chivalry of which most men would be incapable, after a night adventure like Mona's. The girl must be made to understand that she had seriously compromised herself, and that she ought to thank heaven, fasting, for the noble consideration granted by Paul. This had been the point of view for some hours after arriving at a hotel in Füssen, the destination announced to Mona. And it was still the point of view the next morning at breakfast time, though a great deal more magnanimity would be required.

Each quarter-hour that passed, however, made the outlook more gloomy; and at last the baron began to twit the duchess ungratefully upon a false move. She retaliated, and some minutes were wasted in bickering; but presently both saw that their interests were one and could not be divided. Emmilie brought forward the possibility that Mona, in despair at finding herself deserted, might have fallen ill. In that case, she could not have followed her chaperon, even if inclined, and the chaperon might temper justice with mercy, and return for her. Better to forgive than to lose a fortune. This generous resolution was carried out with all possible promptness; and it was not until they had arrived at the inn, to find Mona gone, that the brother and sister

abandoned hope. Then it was, when this last blow had fallen, that Emmilie made use of the expression: "We *must* get it back somehow."

So curiously reserved were the landlord, the landlady, and the whole domestic staff, that the evidence of bribery seemed indisputable to the pair who judged others by themselves. They were not even able to ascertain whether the girl had gone off in the motor-car, or whether the chauffeur had slipped away in his automobile alone. Neither would any one admit a knowledge of the direction taken by either. Altogether, it began to look as if Emmilie's *coup d'état* had been a hideous mistake. She ought, Paul said, to have used force upon the girl, rather than let her slip. But all was not yet lost; though the girl had vanished, dealings might be entered into with her pursuers, eluded yesterday at Innsbrück.

"She's as valuable to the Ransomes as she is to us," said the duchess, feverishly reviewing the situation with Paul, on the very spot where she had parted with Mona the night before. "They'd give anything to get her back—the goose that lays the golden eggs."

"Have they nothing of their own?" A fellow feeling stirred Paul to sympathy—which might prove profitable.

"What's a major's pay to people who have accustomed themselves to every luxury and lived like millionaires? Of course Major Ransome married Mrs. Eversleigh for Mona's money, which was hers till the girl came of age, took a husband, or died."

"I'd have suppressed the little beast," remarked the little beast's late declared lover.

"No, you would n't, for if she dies under age, half the fortune goes to charities and useless things like that. Their hope was to prevent her marrying, or induce her to marry Freddy Ransome, the major's son, and keep the millions in the family. That's why the mother made Mona stay at school until Madame de Norval wrote out to India that it was a disgrace for a girl to stop on after twenty; she would be thought a fool, or a *mauvais sujet*. But as for Mona, she would have preferred remaining forever, to living with her step-mother, who, it seems, showed her claws the moment the father died, when the child was n't ten years old. Mona was put into a boarding-school before her father was cold in his grave; that was the lady's idea of her duty as a guardian; and before her husband had been dead a year she married again. No holidays ever for Mona, no visits to friends; she might have met young men! Her only gaiety Christmas and Easter calls from Freddy Ransome, running over from England with presents from papa and mamma! Freddy Ransome, with the face of a codfish, and the wits of a moon-calf. I can't tell you how many times he's failed for the army, since he was sent down from Oxford. Mona means all the difference between poverty and great riches to the Ransome family."

"If we could only keep in the background, and yet squeeze out a few thousands from them for information."

"It would n't be safe to try that, for we can't give exact information—*yet*; and if they put the police on us, we should be in worse trouble than we've ever been. The only thing is to appear openly, offer help and sympathy—and quietly claim reimbursement for all that Mona has cost us in time and money."

"But how could we explain our position?"

"Easily. I shall say that I was in Paris, and, having called on Mona at school one day, was soon after surprised by seeing her arrive at my *pension*. Let me see—what was her story? Oh, that scarlet fever had broken out in school, and that her relatives wished her to stay with me until they could arrive from India and claim her. I naturally believed so dear a friend. On the point of leaving Paris, as I was, to visit my brother in Austria, the only thing I could arrange was to bring her with me. She fell ill on the way. That would account for the time I hid her in Paris, and would pile up expenses—doctors' bills, hotel bills, and a trained nurse for a week. A long motor-car tour afterwards, to restore her health and spirits—no expense spared by the poor but trusting baron and duchess. Then, suddenly, remorse, confession. Mona admits that she has deceived her guardians, that she has run away, using her friends as cat's-paws. The friends advise, entreat, her to be frank, to wire her friends, whom she saw in Innsbrück, no doubt searching for her. She refuses, and when her friends warn her that they must do what she will not, she bribes the chauffeur to take her away in their motor-car, leaving them stranded. It sounds pretty monstrous, does n't it?"

"And realistic. I almost believe it myself. But they'll learn the truth from her."

"Not till we're out of the business. And even then they'll not be likely to take her statements seriously, after the dance she's led them."

"You're a clever woman, Emmichen," said Paul. "We'll go to Innsbrück, not as fast as we came, but as fast as we can; and, instead of avoiding the Hotel Tirol, we'll make straight for it. Have you any money left out of the sum the late 'Miss Lee' put in your hands?"

"Four or five hundred *gulden* still. She went off without a penny, and will have to live on her pearls; she'd no other jewelry of value."

"Let her live as she can. Now for Innsbrück and the Ransomes. I suppose there's no hope of getting the price of a motor-car out of them?"

"We'll try."

"Suppose they've gone, and left no address?"

"We'll wire Madame de Norval at Paris. She's sure to have it."

"My Emmichen is prepared for every emergency."

And so they made up their differences, and had nothing better to do as they drove—humbly, in a horse-drawn vehicle—back to Innsbrück, than to decide how they would dispose of the Ransomes' money when they got it.

X

It was Freddy Ransome, the young man with the "face of a codfish and the brain of a moon-calf," whom they found at the Tirolerhof. He had left his father and stepmother in Venice, and had come to Innsbrück alone, it seemed, upon the track of a motor-car which had been stolen. But neither the Duchess de Rocheverte nor Baron Paul von Waldern were interested in Freddy's quest, since it was not that of the golden goose. As for Freddy, though he had prided himself upon his detective powers and had telegraphed frantic banalities twice a day to Venice, his attention was easily captured by the duchess and her story.

She was his first duchess, and Paul was his first baron. Being at heart a middle-class young man, in whose intimate experience titles had thus far been scarce, he fell a victim to Emmilie's eyes and rank, the while she talked to him of Mona.

"You believe, don't you, that I was heart-broken when I found out how she had tricked you and tricked us?" asked the duchess, with soft play of lashes, while Paul twisted his mustache and looked incredibly noble.

Of course Freddy believed her. And it seemed piquant to his intelligence to let himself fall in love with a beautiful young married duchess while she helped him track the heiress who was destined for his wife. It was the sort of thing that the hero of a French novel would do.

He wired enthusiastically to Venice, and in consequence of the wire, Major and Mrs. Ransome arrived late next day. Meanwhile, having lost his heart to the duchess, it was a mere detail that he should lose money at cards to the baron—a trifle of three or four hundred pounds; his father would give it to him with pleasure, glad thus indirectly to pay for definite news of Mona Eversleigh.

As for the work which had brought Freddy to Innsbrück, it was forgotten, and he was far more eager to help Emmilie find her brother's automobile than to track down the thief who had run off with the Ransomes'.

Very little was said about the missing motors when Freddy's father and step-mother joined the party. That the baron and the major should each be mourning one at the same moment was certainly a link between them, as well as a curious coincidence; but the Indian officer's chief concern in the Austrian's loss seemed to be his obligation to pay for everything. It was hard upon him that, while he was seeking his step-daughter, his own car should be stolen, and then that she should

annex another, thus making him responsible for damages. Nevertheless, he felt that he could bear anything, once he had the runaway girl again in leading strings.

She would have to marry Freddy now, and ought to be precious glad to get him, since nobody else would have her, after she had gone gadding across the continent with no chaperon but a motor-car, as he remarked with brutal frankness to his wife.

It was one thing for the baron and his sister to beg information from the people of the hotel on the Fern Pass; it would be another when a father and mother demanded it. No matter how big the bribe had been (and Mona, though a school-girl still, was always well supplied with money), those who had accepted it would not dare to hold their tongues against the rights of parents; and the plan proposed by Major Ransome was to visit the inn on the pass without delay.

Already, however, much time had been wasted. It was not until twenty-four hours had gone after parting with Mona, that Emmilie and Paul had arrived, late at night, in Innsbrück. They had not been able to see Freddy until next morning, as he had gone to bed before they appeared at Tirolerhof. His telegram to Venice had not been received and answered until late afternoon, and it was the following afternoon when Major and Mrs. Ransome came upon the scene. By the time they had sketched out a plan of action, it was too late to start upon another journey which could be made only by carriage or motor-car, and they were forced to wait with what patience they could until morning.

The idea was, to hire an automobile and cover the ground as quickly as possible; but there arose a difficulty. It was the high season now, and Innsbrück was full of tourists. Many tourists wanted motors, and there were not many motors to be had. There was not, indeed, one for Major Ransome, and bitterly he cursed, with strange Indian curses, the man who had robbed him of his own legitimate Gryphon. The landlord was consulted, and telephoned to more than one garage, unsuccessfully; but suddenly the baron had an inspiration.

This was late in the evening of the day on which the elder Ransomes had arrived; and it was necessary to arrange something promptly, as, in one way or another, everything must be ready for their departure at an early hour in the morning.

"Let me see what I can do," said Paul, willing to make himself of importance.

No one wished to dissuade him from carrying out this suggestion, yet no one offered to see him through his mission, when it appeared that this meant going out of doors. Major Ransome was tired after his long journey. Freddy Ransome was teaching the duchess to play bridge, and she was proving an apt pupil; which was not so remarkable

as Freddy thought it, since she was already a more skilful player than he.

Paul's inspiration concerned the garage where Larry O'Hagan had kept his car.

It was not a "smart" garage, and for that reason the landlord of Innsbrück's best hotel had probably not thought of it, but there might be some sort of a car there to let. Paul had been to the place only once, but he knew the way, and presented himself without misgiving. Had he interested himself in the story of young Mr. Ransome's stolen automobile, his inspiration would not have taken him in that direction; but he was happy in ignorance, and all seemed to be marching favorably with his affairs. Already he had done well with the Ransome business and was several thousand *gulden* to the good, as consolation for having lost the heiress. He and Emmilie had been asked to write out a list of all expenses incurred by them for Miss Eversleigh, and they would not tarry in granting the request. In addition, Major Ransome had made a generous offer. If Mona and the baron's car had parted company when she was found (as she must be now, in a few days), the baron should be paid for his lost automobile. If, on the contrary, the car was found with her, and in good condition, it should be returned to its owner, and a present of a diamond necklace given by the grateful Mrs. Ransome to the duchess.

In his mind, as he walked through the quiet streets, Paul had been selling those diamonds and dividing the price between himself and Emmilie, taking the larger portion, in case he might have to bribe the discharged chauffeur (if in Mona's employ when found) not to be contradictory. But, arrived on the threshold of the garage, away went the visionary diamonds in a brilliant shower.

Outside the door lounged a fox-faced little man whose mean features he vaguely recalled.

"*Ach*, it is you!" exclaimed the stranger, darting forward. "But you do not speak German. I will fetch some one with a little French, and then we shall know everything." With this he would have trotted into the garage if Paul had not stopped him.

"I do know German. I am myself an Austrian," announced the baron, perplexed and apprehensive, dimly associating the man now with the chauffeur Laurence.

Fox-face hesitated and came back. "Very well," he said. "I thought you knew only French. I am glad I was mistaken. We can now talk quietly together. Will you give me your name?"

"Certainly not, until I know who you are and what you want," answered Paul, growing nervous.

"I am the man whom your chauffeur assaulted some days ago, because I had learned that his car was wanted in Venice."

"Wanted in Venice?" echoed the baron, a quick, hot flush rising to his ears.

"Yes; and since then I have learned without any doubt that he had stolen it from a rich family there, who did not wish to be named in the newspapers. Oh, I do not accuse *you* of anything, sir, not at all. These chauffeurs are villains. Their slyness is beyond belief. It is your help I want. A gentleman has come to Innsbrück to inquire for the stolen car. He heard of my affair from the police, and sent for me. But I did not know enough to please him, and have found out little at the garage. With what you can tell me of your chauffeur——"

"I have nothing to tell you. I know no more than you do," Paul broke in roughly. "I have sent the man away—discharged him—have no idea where he's gone. Better ask inside; I am in a hurry."

"But you were going to the garage."

"I was not," snapped the baron. "I was merely passing."

"A-ah!" exclaimed Fox-face comprehendingly. "I see how it is, sir. You do not want to mix yourself in this business. You have your reasons for that. You do not think of *me*. Well, I must think of myself. You shall tell me what you know—for you *do* know something, I am sure—or I will follow you wherever you may go."

"I shall call the police."

"The police are my friends. They know what I have suffered. They will follow you, too."

Paul thought this not unlikely; and it would be extremely inconvenient. The wild truth had flashed red into his eyes, out of darkness, and dazzled him. The car which he had hired—the car which he had told the Ransomes was his, bought and paid for, and to be paid for again by them if lost—was *their* car, the car stolen from them in Venice, the car for which they searched when their other quest gave them time to think of it. Ah, if he had but taken more interest in Freddy's loose babblings; if he had but asked questions, how easily he might have put two and two together, and how carefully he would then have avoided this garage!

Now it was too late for regrets. He had walked into a trap and was caught by the leg, held back from the success which had been all but in his grasp. This fox-faced man was on his back, as difficult to fling off as the Ancient Mariner's Albatross. Yet he might still cut the string knotted round his neck, before it choked him.

"You want money, I suppose," he said.

"I want it very much."

"I can't give you much, because I have n't it—and you're not worth it if I had. Will you take two hundred *gulden* and your railway fare, to go out of Innsbrück by the express which leaves for Munich at ten o'clock?"

"But I live in Innsbrück."

"You can come back to-morrow."

"That means my fare and return."

"Yes—yes. I'll take you to the station, and see that you get into the train. Come, we have only enough time."

"Ah, you know very well that train makes no stop for hours. You wish to be sure of getting rid of me. I will not do it for two hundred *gulden*. I will accept five."

"You are a robber."

"Ah, who knows what *you* are, sir? But it would be easy to find out, if I stayed."

"I pay you, not because I am afraid, but because I do not wish to be troubled. Five hundred *gulden*, then, but not a *pfennig* more."

Meekly Fox-face walked to the station, stood by while his ticket was bought, accepted the five hundred *gulden* as the express came thundering in, and then refused to go, threatening to make a scene unless he got two hundred more.

Almost in tears, Paul parted with another of his precious bank notes, and thanked his lucky stars (if any) when he saw the train steam out of the station with a foxy face framed in the window of a first class carriage.

For two minutes he felt safe, and basked in the joyous relief of hard-won salvation; but he had not reached the door of the hotel when a thought struck his brain like a blow from a hammer.

What good—save temporary relief—had he obtained by ridding himself of the Albatross? In his confusion, he had forgotten that the identity of the two motors was fatal to his interests. After all, he had practically thrown away his money, for he dared not go out of Innsbrück with the Ransomes; he dared not sell them the help for which he had hoped to be so well paid. The moment they found their car—and that might be at any moment—they would know him a liar. He would be disgraced, discredited.

This red flame of enlightenment melted his hopes as the summer was melting the snows on Innsbrück's wall of white mountains. There was nothing to do but get out of the Ransomes all that could be got to-night, and to have a telegram summoning him and his sister away by the first train to-morrow morning.

Reluctantly, yet firmly, he found that telegram before he joined the Ransomes in the hall of the Tirolerhof, and, with a face sincerely expressive of regret, announced its arrival and contents. There had been an accident in his ancestral castle. He and Emmilie must tear themselves from their new friends, and leave those friends to pursue their mission henceforth unassisted. The duchess, genuinely surprised, shed a few tears that fell upon and blotted the bill for expenses, which

emotion did not prevent the brother and sister from jotting down before good-night was said. Indeed, good-night had to be good-by as well, because, as Paul sadly pointed out, the hour for their train was ridiculously early in the morning.

The Ransomes received the best wishes of the baron and the duchess; the duchess and the baron received the gold of the Ransomes; and Emmilie let Freddy press her hand as she thanked him (not without substantial reason) for teaching her the game of bridge. Later the twins talked things over while they hastily packed.

First came regrets and recriminations; then, on counting over their blessings (materialized in coin or paper), followed consolations. After all, and at worst, they were some thousands of *gulden* to the good; and in the fastness of Schloss Waldberg they could defy futile reproaches from the Ransomes, if the Ransomes by and by stumbled upon the truth.

"You've lost the heiress, but you can save your honor," Emmilie pointed out.

"You mean my furniture," sneered Paul, still smarting with regret for the bright hopes he must abandon.

"It's historic," Emmilie reminded him.

"There's very little of it."

The same might have been said of the honor of the name; but Emmilie said nothing so disagreeable. She remarked, very sensibly, that what there was of furniture and castle was the family stock-in-trade, therefore worth preserving; that while Paul went home, paid off his most pressing debts, and ousted the men in possession, she would return to Paris and collect an American heiress. There was one, she added, quite ready to be culled by the owner of a title—plus a castle—and, though the lady had more years and less money than Mona Eversleigh, still a plain heiress in the hand was worth two pretty ones in the bush.

"Or in stolen motor-cars," finished the baron, already twinkling in the gloom.

XI

EVEN millionaires cannot do everything. They cannot hire motor-cars where there are no motor-cars to be hired. And travelling tediously with a "carriage and pair," the Ransomes railed against fate and the thief who had robbed them of the power of forty horses.

Meanwhile, in the morning papers which they had neglected to buy before starting, appeared an advertisement which would have interested them, had they happened to see it.

Mrs. Ransome's mature beauty was not of the type which permits early morning starts, and the family kept the carriage, ordered at half past nine, waiting until half past ten. They reached the little hotel

of the Fern Pass at evening, in a temper not improved by flashing glimpses of occasional automobiles which dashed gaily and aggravatingly past their sweating horses.

All three were hungry, cross, and tired when they arrived at their destination, and in a mood to trample upon any creature who dared by opposition to stir into foam their cup of bitterness.

But, at first sight, Herr Schmidt and his wife, landlord and landlady, appeared the last people to show unseemly obstinacy. They were a mild and pleasant elderly couple, with polite Austrian manners and hospitable smiles. They even looked as if they could be easily intimidated; and Major Ransome was tempted to bluster in his best French.

He understood that they had denied Baron von Waldern and the Duchess de Rocheverte information concerning the young girl who had left her friends and run away from this inn a week ago. But now here were the parents of that young girl, and every detail of her disappearance must instantly be given.

"It was, on the contrary, the baron and the duchess who ran away," the gentle old lady with the face of a rosy apple ventured to murmur.

"That is a mere quibble," replied Major Ransome, in the tone which he had found successful with servants in India. "I wish to know at once where Miss Eversleigh, calling herself Miss Lee, went, on leaving here, and in what manner she left. As her parents, we are in a position to insist——"

"Her step-parents, I believe," mildly amended Herr Schmidt.

"Ah, you seem to be deep in the lady's confidence!" exclaimed the Indian officer, taken aback, but only for an instant. "As her legal guardians, then——"

"It makes no difference. We can tell you nothing, sir," broke in the landlord, with an apologetic gesture which tempered his incorruptible expression. "The young lady of whom you speak stayed here one night, having placed herself under my wife's care. She then went away in an automobile, which she had doubtless hired, and it was not our business to interest ourselves in her destination."

"You must have seen in which direction she started," said Mrs. Ransome.

"If we did, we have forgotten."

"How much would it take to make you remember?"

"We do not understand your meaning."

"Would this enlighten your intelligence?" Major Ransome showed a brutal bank-note.

The gentle pair shook their white heads. "What we forget," they answered almost in a breath, "we have forgotten."

The landlord's expression remained incorruptible, and there was no longer any polite gesture to temper it.

Rendered murderous by disappointment on top of hunger, fatigue, and heat-headaches, the Ransomes would gladly have killed the innkeepers and burned down their inn. But satisfactory reprisals have gone out of fashion, and the one available revenge was to refrain from spending a *pfennig* under the offensive roof.

But whither to go? was the question they asked each other, as—too literally for physical ease—they hungrily formed a hollow square in the road before the hotel, discussing the next move. They could go on; but where? For all they could learn, the miserable girl might have gone back to Innsbrück; or she might have passed on into Bavaria.

It was when Mrs. Ransome had snapped hysterically at Freddy for proposing to toss up a copper, that a shadow stole out of the dusk and flitted near. It was the shadow of a man who smelt of the stable. The Ransomes could not speak German, but the shadow had a little English. It said that it had heard they were relations of the young lady who had been left by her friends at the inn, and that they wanted to know what had become of her. The shadow could tell them this, and would, if it were made worth a shadow's while. Major Ransome did make it worth while, and was informed that a conversation had been overheard (this shadow seemed to have a knack of overhearing conversations) between the young lady and the *patron* and *patronne*.

The English "mees" had gone to Hohenschwangau with a letter from the landlady to a cousin, Frau Hols, who kept a small *pension* near the castle of Neuschwanstein. How long she was to stop in this *pension*, and why she had gone there at all, the shadow could not say; but the mees had kissed Frau Schmidt on departing, and Frau Schmidt had wished her all happiness. The Schmidts were like that. If they took a fancy to any one, there was nothing they would not do; and the strange part was, it was never for money, because they had made economies, and were rich. If they did *not* fancy any one, there was nothing they *would* do, for all they looked so mild.

Perhaps the Schmidts did not fancy the shadow.

Encouraged, the Ransomes girded themselves to support further fatigue, unnourished. But their horses were obliged to have the rest their masters were willing to forego, therefore the masters must wait; and they purchased stale bread and staler cheese from some mysterious supplies produced by the shadow.

Later they went on, through the Austrian Eden, towards the Eden of Bavaria. In the dark, snow mountains glimmered, floating above black, pine-clad heights, and peering down into mystic gulfs of

shadow, where lakes of ink were traps for stars. At last they drove under the castle ruin of Füssen, and on into Füssen town, where one of the horses fell lame, and it was decided that a halt must be made until morning.

They found a hotel, took rooms, ate, and slept—slept longer than they had meant to sleep. It was full, glorious day, and past lazy people's breakfast time, when the family took a carriage and drove, through country exquisite as a vast private park, to Hohenschwangau, and slowly up the height where the castle of Neuschwanstein towers. Somewhere along the winding, fern-fringed road among pines and chestnuts, they had been told to look for Villa Fanny, the *pension* kept by Frau Schmidt's cousin.

Mrs. Ransome saw it first, and pointed out the picture-painted front, gleaming in fantastic colors in the deep green shadow of great trees.

"There's a motor-car before the door," she said. "It must be hers—I mean the baron's. Thank goodness, we've caught her! But oh! the car's starting. There's some one in it. A woman—sitting beside the chauffeur. It's *she*! She's getting away. Hurry—tell the driver to hurry!"

But the car gracefully turned. It was coming towards them. They were sure of the girl now, and each mind sprang to the thought of punishment. She must be kept close after this. Her conduct had been that of a mad woman. Her treatment in future would have to be appropriate—until, of course, she had been reduced to a proper frame of meekness.

Major Ransome made his coachman stop abruptly in the middle of the road. It would be impossible for the motor-car to pass.

The chauffeur swung swiftly round a corner, and slowed suddenly at sight of the stationary carriage in his way.

"Jove, governor! *The photograph!*" cried Freddy, leaping up. "Your chauffeur—your Gryphon. It's the thief himself."

"Then it can't be Mona. She was in the baron's car," gasped Mrs. Ransome.

"It is Mona. I see her—and *she sees us.*"

There was an instant of doubt and apprehension. Would the car reverse, and run away from them, escaping after all?

But no. The girl spoke to the chauffeur, and he came steadily on. With the bonnet of the motor almost nose to nose with the stolid horses, he brought the Gryphon suddenly to a standstill.

"Major Ransome, I believe?" he said, as quietly as Stanley greeted Livingstone in the desert, his audacity silencing the family for an instant. "I'm very glad to find you at last, though so unexpectedly, for I had to run away with your car from Mestre, you know, to save

it from the clutches of your Venice landlord. Since day before yesterday—when I could afford it—I've been advertising for you in the agony columns of several papers. This lady says now that she knows you—how, she has n't told me yet, otherwise I might have passed you without——”

“You would not have passed us!” shouted Major Ransome, on fire with his anger at the good-looking ruffian. “We have your photograph, and the police have it. This lady, as you are well aware, is my ward, my wife's step-daughter, Miss Eversleigh.”

“Oh, Larry, forgive me, it's true!” cried Mona. “I thought you would n't take me if you knew about the horrid money, and I was going to tell you to-day.”

“Take you? What do you mean, you miserable girl?” screamed Mrs. Ransome.

“We were married an hour ago,” said Mona.

Of course Larry forgave her. What would he not have forgiven? And, for their own sakes, the Ransomes had to pretend that they forgave her, too. She allows them three thousand a year. And they presented her with the Gryphon as a wedding gift.



THE EAGLES

BY ELSA BARKER

O EAGLE mate of mine, the souls are few
 That scale the heights where we have made our nest
 Above the perilous chasm! Breast to breast
 We battle with the darkness, and the clue
 To our far flight is written in the true
 Eyes of the constellations. All unguessed
 In the dull valley is the dizzy quest
 That calls us to patrol the pathless blue.

The air is thin where we entice our brood
 Of young to measure their frail wings with Fate;
 But they are nourished on ethereal food
 Found only on these crags inviolate.
 Facing the void, the wind, the solitude,
 We are God's pioneers, O eagle mate!

DINNY O'NEILL

A TALE OF THE DAYS OF THE IRISH REBELLION

By Seumas MacManus

THERE were only himself and his mother by the fire now; and he, full conscious of the fond pride with which his poor old mother was scanning him, kept his eyes fixed immovably on the fire-blaze before him. His mother sat by the side of the fire, upon a stool; but he sat before it on a chair. Dinny would have preferred a stool also; for sitting upon a stool, as always he used before he went to France, he could more palpably realize that he was by his mother's fireside again. But his mother would not, for a moment, tolerate the idea. Thaidy Durnien's smuggling smack had hardly cleared the little French harbor, with Dinny aboard, in addition to its Dutch cargo, when Dinny's mother took down from the room, and wiped, and placed upon the hearth to receive him, one of the three chairs with turned legs (the workmanship of old Eamonn Mhairid), her pride, and the pride of the parish. This chair she placed in position and glanced at many, many times a day, pleasantly picturing to herself a big young man, handsome (so she thought) and already half a priest, seated on it, making the day brighter, the night cheerier, and transforming the little cabin into a castle by his presence. Denis was with her now, her picture was fully realized, and she was happy as it is permitted mortal to be.

"What beats me, Dinny," she said, after she had for long feasted her eyes in silence upon him, "is how extraor'ner' big ye have grown! Why, there is n't a bishop o' thim all would n't look a *dawnie* wee craiture beside ye!"

This was not the first, nor yet the fiftieth, time that his mother in the pride of her heart had passed the same remark to him. But Dinny laughed at it again; and, with a furtive, ashamed look, glanced down at the long limbs of him, remembering the sore trial his big proportions proved to him in France, where they used to joke him as "The Irish Giant." Some of them, indeed, were accustomed to carry their jests to an annoying extent, but Dinny, who might easily have lifted his puny gibers in handfuls and knocked their heads together, was never known to retaliate in any form.

"Big," she repeated, looking at his frame, "and"—looking him in the face—"handsome. May the Lord spare ye!"

Dinny blushed and laughed again. "Now, mother," he remonstrated smilingly, "ye want to spoil me."

A mother sees beauties that appeal in vain to a less sympathetic eye. In Dinny's features there certainly was not anything classic. That his face was honest and kindly, with a dreamy eye, and surmounted by a great mop of the blackest hair, was the most that might be said for Dinny O'Neill's face by a disinterested party.

"God rest your poor father, Dinny, but ye're the downright picture of him when he was your age."

"God rest him!" Dinny piously responded, as he looked into the fire.

His mother sighed.

"He always said," Rosha O'Neill went on, "'We'll make a priest o' Dinny.' And the last word of him a'most was, 'Rosha, I'm afeerd our wee Dinny, God help him, will never get the chance o' goin' for a priest now.' 'Dinnis,' I said to him, 'the arm o' God is strong. If it's His will wee Dinny should be a priest, he'll be it; if it's not, Dinnis, then God's will be done.' 'You're right, Rosha,' siz he, 'as ye always were—God bless ye! And mind,' siz he, 'Rosha, I'll not forget in Heaven yourself and wee Dinny; and every night yourself and wee Dinny kneels down be the lonely fireside to say the Rosary, I'll that instant kneel me down afore God's own Throne and join with yous. It's not likely, Rosha, that God'll forget yous, the lonely widda and orphan!' And from the day the green sod was laid over him, Dinny, you and I niver knelt down to say the Rosary, that the lonesomeness did n't all at once rise off my heart, and me prayers seemed to do me double good, moreover. Dinny, Dinny, *a thaisge mo chroidhe*,* never you forget that your father's watchin' ye, and that he's prayin' for ye!"

"Mother, I never let it out o' me mind."

"Then, Dinny, *a thaigir*, ye'll never do wrong."

"Ye made a wonderful struggle, mother. I was small help to ye when me poor father left us."

"God helped me, Dinny, *a leanbh*."†

"He did, mother. Praise to Him."

"Amen, amen, Dinny. And a brave struggle ye made yourself. I mind it well the pain it cost me to take ye from school. Your time there had been small, and the larnin' ye got was light. Then ye had to work hard, early and late"—Dinny was gazing reflectively into the fire—"early and late, trudgin' and carryin'—without boot

* Treasure of my heart.

† Child.

or shoe, and in throth no great brag o' clo'es aither—rain or dhry, frost or snow. Then when ye had your hard day's work over, and ye'd get your supper, ye'd dhraw your little books to ye, and stretch yourself be the h'arth on the hard flag, sthrivin' to read thim be the light o' the fire—for a candle I could n't afford ye."

"Ah, mother," Dinny said, with a pitying smile, "it's well I mind the times I used to have gettin' through with me wee bunch o' torn school-books. It's many's the time in France I used to think it over—and did n't know whether to laugh or cry. Sore it used to put on me them nights be the fire, when I'd meet a hard point, and no one near to make it aisy for me. But I always wrestled with it, mother. I never give in——"

"Ye did n't, a *leanbh*."

"It was me poor father's wish (God be merciful to him!) and it was your wish, that I'd be a priest. And when you foun' ye had to take me from school it well-nigh broke your heart—for it never entered your mind that I, a poor boy, trudgin' and carryin' and delvin' in the ditch-*sheuch* all day long, could ever hope to stand one day upon the altar and extend my hands over a congregation, saying 'Dominus vobiscum' to them."

His mother wiped her eyes with the corner of her linen apron, and she said:

"I could n't 'a' dhraimt it, Dinny."

"I knew that, mother. But the very day after me poor father went his last journey, as I stood in a wet *sheuch*, up to me knees in cold mud—I mind it as if it was yesterday mornin'—I suddenly stopped workin', and stuck me spade in the ground, and down on the broo' I went on me two knees, and axed the Almighty to help me to be what me poor father and me mother had both set their hearts on—and I for my part should thry in me own humble way to prove a faithful servant unto Him. I took a hould o' me spade again, mother, with a lighter heart; and that very night, though I come home dragged and tired, I drew me books to me, as ye sayed, after I'd eaten me stirabout, and fell to them with a grim will, because I sayed to meself, 'With God's good help, I'm goin' to be a priest.' And many a night after, I come home wearied and worn again, and wet to the skin, but I never neglected to spend me two, and sometimes three, hard hours at night, worryin' over the books till I got the better o' them."

"Oh, Dinny! Oh, Dinny!"

"Arrah, mother dear, get out with your cryin'! What are ye cryin' about? It's laughin', and laughin' hearty, ye should be. It's many a hearty laugh meself takes over it now, when I think of it, and think of the *dawnie* thrifies I would wrestle a whole night over in me books. Ha, ha, ha!" he forcedly laughed.

And a smile then lit up the moist eye of his mother.

"And then, Dinny," she said, "ye mind the winter ye tuk to the Latin? It was Oul' Hallowmas Day, I mind me well. Ye had every han's turn of work that could be done, done; and ye sayed, in God's name ye'd start the Latin. And, rain or snow, ye thravelled five days o' the week, all round that winter, into Dinnygal for ten mile of a mornin', and out again your ten mile of an evenin'. Ye were away afore the first light was in the aky, and ye were back afther a long nightfall."*

"I mind it, mother, I mind it;" and Dinny's eye was laughing. "I mind steppin' out in me sleeved waistcoat (that the Dinnygal boys used to make such fun of), me books tied in a string and slung over me shoulder, and I clearin' the hills like a young kid. I had many's the merry mornin' thrippin' it to Dinnygal. When I had a moon I felt as happy as a king's son; when there was no moon I had plenty of fun—for it's many's the comical tumble I got; and when I found that I had missed sousin' intil a bog-hole I used to laugh hearty. I used always to sit down on the top lands of Altdoogh to take breath, and watch the sun risin'—that was a beautiful sight, mother."

"It was, a *leanbh*."

"I used to think the Latin frightsome hard then, mother; but I shot ahead of the other boys all the same. The big disadvantage they were at, mother, was that they had n't ten mile to come to school in the mornin', and ten more to go back from it at night. I was goin' through me declensions and conjygations as I run to school and run from it. It made the way short, and it fetched me on mighty quick at me Latin. And I mind me mornin's too, when there was a nice, clear, frosty moon, and that I had plenty of time. I mind me such mornin's sittin' down on one o' the big steps across the Ainey River, and constherin' [construing] half a page of Cæsar with a dale of worry and trouble."

"A *theagair*!"

"Ach-hach-hach! How I do laugh when I think of it! And Cæsar is no more to me now than a 'Readin'-med-aisy'! I could take him in me han', there, be the light o' the fire, mother, and rhyme him off like a ballad."

"Thu-thu-thu." (An expression of amazed wonder his mother made by clicking her tongue against the palate.)

"And Vargil! Vargil comes as aisy to me as 'As I roved out one mornin'!'"

* Poor boys in Donegal who sought to raise themselves—and who did raise themselves—did not unfrequently, like poor Dinny, trudge ten and twelve miles to school daily; a bit of oaten-bread and butter their sole refreshment from their quitting home before day till they walked back again after night.

"Oh, Dinny, Dinny!"

"It's the simple truth, mother. Some night, mother, afore I go away I'll tell ye all Vargil, from '*Conticeure omnes*' to the last word."

"I'll be delighted, Dinny. What is Vargil all about?"

"Vargil, he was a Roman, mother, and a great poet——"

"I thought ye toul' me wanst that he was a haythen, Dinny?"

"And a haythen he was, mother—for a Roman in them days did n't mane a Catholic."

"Did n't it, a *gradh*?"

"No, mother; it meant a man livin' in Rome, or near it. Anyhow, ye heard tell often o' the wars of Troy, mother?"

"I did, Dinny."

"Well, mother, as I sayed, Vargil was a great Roman poet, who made a great song—wan o' the greatest and the longest ever was made—on one o' the first warriors o' Troy, *Æneas*. *Æneas*, he was the second greatest fighter in Troy—after *Hecthor*—and he did wonders till the Greeks took the city and begun to *slachter* all afore them. Then *Æneas* called on his family to run with him. He h'isted his poor old father on his shoulders, himself——"

"God reward him, Dinny! He was a good son!"

"He was, mother. But behold ye, Troy was in such an uproar, like the fair of Carney, that what would ye have of it but he lost his wife——"

"Lord pity him! The poor fella!"

"Anyhow, mother, he got off with his father and the rest of his family, and his henchman, and they all took shippin', meanin' to sail to some country where they could settle down, and build a town, and live peaceably ever after. But everything went agen him, and seven long years he was battered about like a willy-wagtail in a storm, from post to pillar over the seas of the worl'. Well, Vargil he wrote a great ballad—in the Latin language—on these wanderings of poor *Æneas*, and he called it the *Æneid*. And it was so great and so long and so beautiful, and such a good one for learnin' the Latin from, that from that day to this they have preserved it."

"But, Dinny, what happened Inays in the end?"

"Oh, his poor father died, and he married in Italy a king's daughter——"

"And any king might well be proud to have the likes of him for a son-in-law!"

"And he settled down, and—they lived happy and well ever after. I'll tell ye the whole story, both in Latin and in English, some night, mother."

"Thank ye, Dinny, for that. I would lake to hear it, for I'm

mighty interested in Inays. An awful han' at the Latin, by the same token, ye must be now, Dinny!"

"Oh, purty fair, mother, purty fair. A piece of purty tough Latin would n't now give me more trouble than sweet bread and butter."

"Thu-thu-thu! Now, does the Frinchmen, Dinny, just speak same as you and me? Or is it in the Latin they talk to one another?"

"Ha, ha, ha! That's a good one! No, mother, dear; the Frenchmen talks to one another in French. And when I'm there I have to speak French to them."

"You, Dinny! Can ye speak Frinch too?"

"Yis, mother; I was n't long there till I picked it up. You should hear me slingin' the French about me when I'd meet a Frenchman. Doffin' me hat—lake this—with a graceful bow (they're monsthrous polite, mother, the Frenchmen) and '*Bon jour, Monsieur! Comment vous portez-vous, Monsieur, ce matin?*'"

His mother was regarding him with awestruck admiration.

"That's as much as to say, mother"—with a smile of pleasurable pride playing over his features—"The top o' the mornin' to ye, good sir! How do you find yourself and all your care this salubrious mornin'?" Ach, mother, it would be as good as another year to your life to hear me bangin' the French at his head."

"Well, wonders alive, Dinny! that takes in all ever I heerd! Ye must have the wonderfulest head ever was set atween mortal shoulders. Thu-thu-thu!" She shook her own head, as in despair of being able to give expression to her astonishment.

"And, Dinny, do they—do they always speak in that sort o' language?"

"Always in French, mother. If they wanted the loan of a bag off ye, it's in French they'd ask it; and if they come to cut your throat, it's in French they'd tell it to ye."

"Well, that bates all ever I heerd! But, Dinny, how do they understand wan another, if they always talk in that sort of a way? That's what I'd like to know."

"The same—ha, ha! the very same, just, mother, as if you and I started to talk Gaelic—*Bh'uil Gaedhúlg agat, a mhathair?*"*

"*Ta neart, a mhic.*"†

"There ye are now, mother! In the very self-same way the Frenchmen understand themselves. French, ye see, as I may say, is their Gaelic. See, mother?"

"Oh-h-h, ye make me sinsible now, Dinny *a thaisge*—but I think it quare how they can understand it, all the same."

* "Have you Gaelic, mother?"

† "Ay, plenty, son."

Dinny laughed a right hearty, good-natured laugh at his mother's simplicity. "Anything you're brought up to, mother, ye'll understand. And they never hear nothin' but French from the first day they see the light."

"And do ye mean to say, Dinny, that the very childre there speak Frinch?"

"They speak nothin' else, mother;" and Dinny glanced sideways at her with a roguish look. His mother looked into the fire, and shook her head, as resigning an unsolvable puzzle.

"I suppose, Dinny," she said after some time, "if ye had to be long among them Frinchmen ye'd forget poor Irelan'?"

Dinny turned upon her a very serious gaze.

"Ah, mother, if I was compelled to live in it all my life, and that my life was the length o' three lives, Irelan' would never leave me heart."

"Ah, Dinny," she said, now smiling, "I don't doubt ye."

"Mother," he went on, "if you would only know how much I do be thinkin' about poor Irelan'! It's often in France the heart within me used to bleed for it, thinkin' and thinkin' on all it has suffered. God forgive me, mother, I could n't help picturin' poor Irelan' like our blessed Saviour Himself in the garden, sweatin' a bloody sweat—and we that should be watchin' by her, mother, only sleepin'. God forgive me! And God forgive the whole of us!"

His mother observed the blaze before her with a sad look.

"Mother, when night and mornin' I'd kneel down in me room to say me wee mouthful o' prayers, I used always and ever kneel with me face tor'st Irelan'. And two things I never forgot to mention in me prayers was you and Irelan', mother."

"God bless ye, Dinny, *a chuisle, mo chroidhe*."

"It was n't a bit wrong to face Irelan', mother, and pray tor'st it—because God's always here. I know plenty o' the students, mother, and they love Irelan' with all the veins of their hearts; but they shake their heads over it, and say God has forsaken it, and they try to point out to me a proof on every page of history. But I say, 'Whom God loveth, He chasteneth.' God has tried Irelan' surely, and tried it sorely—but He never forsook us, nor we Him."

"No, no, Dinny."

"And, mother, His han' must soon be lifted off our poor sufferin' country. As no other nation in the worl' has been tried, Irelan' has—and not foun' wantin'. The Lord is just; and Irelan', that was once the light o' the civilized worl', 'ill be so, plaise the Lord, soon again."

"God hasten it, sonny, God hasten it!"

"An', mother—I know ye'll laugh at me—but—I used sometimes,
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when I'd get be me lone, and be thinkin' of poor Irelan', I—used to—write poetry to it!"

The murder was out. Dinny blushed all over, anticipating his mother's laugh. But she only turned on him loving, thankful, sympathetic eyes.

"Oh, Dinny!"

"Yis—I'll—I'll—I have it in the bottom o' me box, and when I get reachin' as far as it the morra, I'll maybe let ye hear some of it, mother—if ye promise not to laugh at me!"

"God bliss ye, Dinny, a *mhuirnin*."

And indeed his mother, far from laughing, shed tears when Dinny next night read for her his poem:

TO IRELAND

A fierce flame burnt at boyhood's dawn, within my tender breast;
Impassioned love my soul consumed for Motherland oppress.
Her glories gilt my waking hours, her woes my dreams o'ercast;
And the love that fed my heart's first fire, please God, shall
light my last.

There's not a little bell that blows in Ireland's dewy glens,
There's not a sagan waves a spear above her many fens,
There's not a tiny blade of grass on all her thousand hills,
But this fond breast with tender love to overflowing fills.

O Ireland, for your holy sake I'll joyful bear all pain;
To your high cause I consecrate my heart, my hand, my brain.
If life and strife avail me not to save that soul one sigh,
Then—crowning joy!—in your proud name, let one unworthy die!

In the early morning, six weeks later, Dinny O'Neill, with a heavy heart, was trudging over the mountain road, making the best of his way from Glen Columbcille. Thaidy Durnien's smack was there to spread her dingy wings at eleven o'clock that night and glide off upon another private expedition. Dinny's little box had gone down by Mosie Monahan's cart the day before, and Dinny expected to board her himself that night; for a pleasant vacation was now expired, and he must to France again.

Dinny heard the noise of horses behind him. He turned and observed three yeomen, with flint-locks slung, riding up.

"Hilloa!" said a bull-necked fellow of them, when they had overtaken Dinny.

"Good-morning," Dinny said, with as little gruffness as he could.

"Where do you go so early, frien'?" asked the bull-necked fellow.

"I'm travellin' to a frien' in Glen," Dinny replied unconcernedly.

"You're early afoot," said another of them.

"Are you a loyal man, sir?" the third asked bullily.

"Yes," Dinny said, looking his interrogator in the face with a shade of defiance. "I'm a loyal man—loyal to Ireland," he added to himself.

"Take it quietly, me frien'—if you're loyal atself, don't be too — impudent on the stren'th of it. These is days when it takes very little provocation to make a man with *our* power"—and he tossed his head—"sen' either a rebel to hell, or a loyal fella with too much cheek to heaven. D' ye see?"

"In the meantime," the bull-necked fellow said, "our frien's too good to be wasted on heaven. We badly need this very mornin' just such a fella, with the powerful wind of arm that you must have. Come, step out brisker, along with us, frien', and we'll give ye an opportunity of provin' your loyalty."

For a mile and a half they jogged behind Dinny, who swung along as he had been doing, and spoke not.

"Halt!"

Dinny, obeying the command, halted in front of a miserable hovel, from a hole in the roof of which the fresh blue smoke of a kindling fire was rolling.

The bull-necked yeoman, who seemed to be in command, walked forward and struck the door with the butt end of his gun. An old man, bare-headed and with long gray locks, opened the door and thrust out his head. He had evidently only just risen; he was still in his bare feet and in trousers and shirt. Over the mild features of the old man crept a look of terror when he beheld the party.

"God save ye, gentlemen," he said.

"— ye! shut up! We did n't come here to listen to such jaw. Where's your scoundrel of a son, Gallagher?"

"I can only tell yous, gentlemen, what I toul' yous afore: I b'lieve he's gone off to Amerikay. I heerd no tidin's of him since."

The bull-necked fellow walked forward to the door and gripped the old man by the shoulder. He pulled him out, and, with a powerful but seemingly easy effort, swung him contemptuously aside. The poor old man spun round and round, grasping at the air in a ludicrous manner that made the two on-looking yeomen roar with laughter. He fell slap on his back, his head striking a big stone with a dull thud that told the great power the assailant had put in his thrust. Then, stunned, he lay there with arms extended and his long gray locks scattered abroad on the mud. The yeoman had gone into the house, searched it, and was out again, when the old man had found his senses.

"The devilish rascal is n't there, anyhow," he said as he emerged.

"Not aisy for him," said one of the others—"not aisy for him to have been both with the rebels in Derry and here likewise. Here or there, he'll be run to earth afore the year's much older—that's wan consolation. In the meantime, captain, we must collect our interest."

"Oh, oh!" ejaculated the poor old man, who had risen on one knee, throwing out his arms appealingly towards them.

"Confound your squawkin', ye rebelly oul' villain! Come on, boys!"

They tore the shirt off him, jesting and gibing as they did so, bound his hands at the wrist with a thin, hard cord that bit into the flesh, dragged him to the house-side, and there, hoisting him, succeeded in getting the bound wrists over one of the stout oaken pegs used for tying the roof-ropes to, just under the eave. By this means he was suspended with his feet just raised from the ground. The old man had ceased appealing. He moaned subduedly.

"Now, sirrah," said the captain to Dinny, who in a sort of stupor had been from behind glaring at all this—"now, sirrah, you'll have an opportunity of proving your loyalty. Step forward! Where's the whip, Lowry?"

One of his companions produced a whip with a thong of hard leather, at one end a knot, and the other end bound on an ashen stick about two feet long. "Here ye are, captain—this is the tax-gatherer." All three laughed heartily at the good joke.

"Now, sir, you'll collect the interest. This oul' scoundrel on the wall owes us his son, and till he pays us we must have our interest—a hundred and twenty lashes a fortnight—too — chape. See ye lay them on with a good bite in every one of them, or, by heaven, if ye don't, we'll lay them on yourself!"

Dinny O'Neill had his lips compressed and was breathing hard during this latter scene. He regarded the speaker with a penetrating stare, and as the whip reached him he started and a flood of blood burst into his face. He snapped the whip out of the yeoman's hand. "Hellish dog!" he thundered, and at the same instant, with the speed of lightning, drew him a tremendous cut of the leathern thong across the face, which literally opened the man's countenance and blinded him with blood. He uttered one scream of anguish, covered his face with his hands, and staggered drunkenly backwards against the wall of the cabin. With an awful oath, Lowry sprang at Dinny with clubbed gun. Had his blow been more coolly addressed, Dinny's skull would have been smashed like a card-board box, but as it was, the weapon caught him above the ear and glanced downwards, his shoulder receiving the main force of the blow. Instantly Dinny had Lowry by the throat with one hand, and, though Lowry was a big, strong brute, he shook him till he made his jaws rattle. Holding him off at arm's length, he attempted to cut him along the face with the whip, but, finding himself only partially successful, he caught hold of the fellow with both hands and dashed him, as you might dash a dead dog, against the wall of the house. As Lowry's head struck it he was knocked senseless, and rolled

like a log to the ground. A loud report rang in Dinny's ears, he felt a sting between his shoulders, his hands dropped to his side, opened and closed spasmodically, and in a moment he fell.

Fifteen minutes later there was a pair of moist, kindly eyes beaming into his. "*Farior gear! Mo nuar, mo nuar!*" It was a woman who wailed. "Who are ye, a *phaisdin mo chroidhe*, that they've murdered?"

"I'm Dinny O'Neill." There was something gurgling in his throat which prevented him speaking freely. "My mother—she lives in—Crickanardha. Tell—tell me mother Irelan' needed me life—sooner—nor I thought. Tell—me mother—I said—I'd—be—waitin'—"

God rest ye, Dinny O'Neill! You had n't long to wait till she joined you and your father.

HELOISE TO GOD

BY GRACE DUFFIELD GOODWIN

GOD, send an angel! I am sorely pressed
In struggle with Love's naked, unarmed might;
Each particle of power I possessed
I dragged to conflict in the unequal fight,
And I have fought and failed upon his breast
Once more to-night.

How can the little quivering form of Prayer
Stand long between my soul and passion's power?
She needs must flee to some diviner air
Where dwell those hearts without such earthly dower
Of life and longing, rapture and despair,
As fill this hour.

God, send an angel! Of Thy sovereign will
Bid Michael bring the hosts of Heaven to aid
One human soul, lest Love should strike to kill,
And none should guess how as I strove I prayed,
Knowing if I be smitten stark and still
'T was God delayed.

“WHY IS PERPETUAL PEACE IMPOSSIBLE?”

By Willard French

IT is written: “In the multitude of counsellors there is safety.”

It is written again: “Too many cooks will spoil the broth.”

In the devotion of its friends the great peace problem has suffered as well as benefited during the past months, when thousands of local congresses have sought to make straight in the desert a highway for the second Peace Congress, now assembled at La Hague.

What the Congress will do will still be an open question when these lines are in print, but it will be coming close to a conclusion. If the delegates have listened to all that has been urged—that might, could, would, or should be done—they have doubtless discovered that in the multitude of counsellors too many cooks have rendered a perfect broth impossible. Take, for example, the Peace Conference that was convened in New York in April. It was better than a sample. It was an exponent of the efforts to centralize the desires of the nation—the nation which must be among the leaders in all the world movements of the future. It was a meeting of a Peace Society formed only eight years short of a century ago—the first organization of the kind in the world. It was particularly significant because through the efforts and largely at the expense of its president, Andrew Carnegie, there came to it the leading advocates of perpetual peace from England, Scotland, France, Germany, South America, and all over the United States. But one who breathed the blue clouds from the Pipe of Peace which enveloped New York through the four days of the convention could not well help arriving at the consensus of conviction that perpetual peace was only a dim and far-distant possibility which we might approach, even, only in the slow lapse of long, weary years, like creeping children, coming to it inch by inch.

The extreme of pessimism was in the stentorian shot at Stead: “Jesus Christ has been trying for two thousand years to bring peace to the world. Do you think that you can do it in one lifetime?”

The champions of optimism were Edward Everett Hale and W. J. Bryan; and I fancy even they were of opinion that perpetual peace was still a dream.

If a fair definition of optimist is "one who has been talking with a pessimist," and vice versa, then one who has not talked with either—only listened to both—may be neither. At all events, no part of the programme from the platform appealed to me as did the question of a youngster who sat beside his father through one of the sessions—a bored look in his tired eyes while wise men filled the hall with eloquence. Stead of London was on his feet. In his drastic way he shouted: "They tell us it is all an elusive vision! They say that perpetual peace is impossible!"

Said the little lad: "Papa, *why* is perpetual peace impossible?"

His father said: "Hush!" and he hushed. But ever since I have been trying to rid myself of the question by answering it. It is not impossible. It is not improbable. It is not a far reach ahead, unless we make it so by pushing off an almost immediate possibility that lies legitimately and reasonably within our grasp, to-day.

From force of habit, even the optimists yield too much. For years it was accepted as a scientific fact that a two-pound fish dropped in a tub of water would not increase its weight, because the fish weighed nothing in the water. Carefully constructed blunders were made on the strength of it, till some foolish one tried the experiment and found that the weight of his tub increased by the weight of the fish in air. Were some foolish one to try an experiment with this peace proposition, we might be again surprised.

The secret of peace—all peace, perpetual peace—was never a secret. Isaiah advertised it when he foretold the advent of one to be called The Prince of Peace, because he would "establish it with judgment and with justice." The angels of Bethlehem proclaimed his coming with, "Peace on earth to men of good will" (*hominibus bonæ voluntatis*). One of the two all-important commandments which He left was, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

That is all there is to peace. If simply that is accomplished, perpetual peace is a necessity. You and I live at peace—perpetual peace—because we must, whether or no we are so minded. We frequently disagree. A white-livered lot we should be if we didn't. We may each think that we are right. Or I may be a conscienceless rascal. But however strenuous our antagonism, we shall never resort to knives and pistols—not out in public, at least, where others can see—for we know how quickly the police would quiet us, to our mutual discomfiture. You will have me in court, instead; punish my rascality by law if you can, and in any case peacefully accept the final verdict—because you must. Because it is the law. Because it is—or ought to be—judgment with justice. If you are honest, that is all that you desire. It is all that the nation which is honest can desire. The man or the nation who seeks for more needs most the paternity of police.

The great work of the first Peace Congress was the establishment of a perpetual Tribunal of Justice—arbitration—at La Hague, to which, by mutual consent, nations could refer what differences they chose. The volume of international questions which have since been voluntarily submitted to the Hague Court is something astonishing; and, with a single exception, the verdict has been followed by the immediate and full submission of the loser, without either sheriff or police to enforce it or keep the peace. Eventually this appeal to the Hague instead of to arms must be obligatory and as reasonable as an interstate appeal to the Supreme Court. As a matter of fact, an international code and constitution alone are necessary to accomplish this, and in accomplishing it the world's peace has instantly been made perpetual—as eternally inviolable as peace, to-day, between neighbors or between the States of our Union.

These two things are not far-distant possibilities to be slowly approached through years of creeping. No one thinks that. They lie wholly within the scope of the present Hague Congress. The creation of both would cause less revolution, evolution, involution, or shock to existing conditions than the creation of the Tribunal by the first Congress. They are the two things upon which all of the advocates at all of the preliminary conventions agreed as not only necessary but among the most probable results of the great convention. The surprising feature is that none of the advocates seem to have realized that upon the creation of these two—and these two alone—rests the beginning of an immediate end of all possibility of war between any of the nations of the earth, forever more. It means the completion of a system requiring only ratification by the signatory powers—only a few of the leading powers, for that matter—to be set in full motion, and from that moment to effect an indestructible barrier against the remote possibility of another war throughout the wide world. These two creations lie in simply making the Hague Congress automatically a periodic convention and in the production of a complete arbitration treaty. Lo! the Constitution, the Legislature, and the Court! With no other machinery than this, forty-five States of the Union are independent in self-government, but beyond the remote possibility of another war. Very much simpler, in reality, with less friction, will be the conduction of the forty-five nations of the world by the same process.

All talk of disarmament is absurd. Disarmament is unnecessary—it is undesirable. With the automatic convention of the Hague Congress to adjust international law, with a complete arbitration treaty binding the nations to resort only to La Hague, every nation of the earth will be, by the very condition, guardian of the peace, and its moderate armament will be like the police patrol upon a peaceful

street—a guardian and guaranty that the peace will be perpetual. To that moderate necessity the armaments of the world will quickly adjust themselves, as surely as water seeks its level.

Nearly every nation on the earth is represented at the Hague Congress. If they make the reconvention periodically automatic, and if they prepare a complete arbitration treaty for universal use, they have done enough. They have done it all.

All of the nations might not be willing at first glance to sign the treaty, but if half of them should sign, or a quarter, the deed is done and perpetual peace assured. If even the three strongest nations of the earth bound themselves under an indissoluble treaty-constitution to refer all international questions to the Hague Tribunal and combined in the declaration that war must cease, is it supposable that any two of the other nations would dare attempt to fight a controversy out with arms? But if three great nations will sign such a treaty, five will sign—and all will sign. They would be strictly held to every obligation of the treaty, whether they signed or not—as justly and as surely as the stranger within our gates, who has taken no oath of allegiance, is held to the Constitution and the law by the authority of the courts, and by the power of the police is forced to keep the peace.

Thus these two simple acts most confidently urged upon the present Hague Congress leave only the ratification of the treaty between to-day and an irrefragable guaranty of perpetual peace.

But will the nations sign such a treaty? America must obviously be among the first. Will America sign?

Whoever among our Romans has the keenest sight, let him say what from yonder cloud of dust obscuring the Sixtieth Congress comes as an indication of what the United States Senate will do when a complete arbitration treaty is presented to it for ratification.

Almost the last official work of the late Secretary Hay was the framing of several arbitration treaties, in consultation with the diplomatic representatives of the respective powers, following closely the lines of arbitration compacts which had already been signed between a number of prominent nations. One of these treaties was sent to the Senate, to test its temper. It was immediately and rather vigorously turned down. It was an imperfect arbitration treaty. No such treaty must be the model presented now for universal signature, if peace is the result to be attained. But it was not the short-comings of the treaty which the Senate discussed. The rebellion arose over a clause concerning the authority to make consignment of certain cases to the Hague Tribunal, in language which curtailed the treaty-making prerogatives of the Senate and increased the power of the Executive. The Senate of the United States is very jealous of its constitutional rights—and very wisely so.

The perfect arbitration treaty must avoid that clause, for it must not discriminate between cases. It must bind the signers to consign *all* unadjustable differences, of whatever nature, to the High Court, and to abide by the verdict. It must make the appeal of either party to the Court sufficient to transfer the question to its jurisdiction. And that is substantially all that the treaty-constitution of the world need be.

At all hazards, it must omit one other clause common to all of the foregone arbitration treaties. It must omit the reservation from submission to the court of questions touching a nation's honor and integrity. There will doubtless be the rub with the mighty nations which must take the lead; for when a nation feels confident of its power "honor and integrity" at once becomes a term to conjure with, a term to agitate, a term to thrill with absurd and silly pride, a shield for any possible affront or ambition, a senseless, meaningless term until some sinister sense is instilled for the purpose of accomplishing an ulterior desire. With puffed cheeks and swelling chests we strut about and talk of our nation's honor and integrity which must not be assaulted, Hague or no Hague, unless we wash away the smirch with blood!

O tempora, O mores! As nations we are back in the clutches of barbarism and appealing to the lost code of penalized dueling. Men who were spoiling for a fight with those they felt sure they could vanquish used to carry about on their shoulders a chip which they called their honor and integrity. We do not do so now; but are we therefore less adorned with honor and integrity? If there ever was a smirch put on one man's honor by another, did that man ever really wash it out by shedding blood? The nation longing for conquest can easily force or find an assault upon its honor for its patriotic citizens to rave and fight about. But if a nation's honor was ever effectively impeached or assaulted, did that nation ever restore its integrity by firing cannons at the subjects of its wrath? Our nation's honor is not so fragile that an indignity from another nation can possibly justify the hell of war. The idea is barbaric in any case. The thought is preposterous if there exists an international law and an international tribunal. If a nation claims sufficient cause against another and would rather go to war, with all its horrors, than carry its contention into publicity, for the serious consideration of a neutral court, it is no uncertain indication that that nation should be forced to arbitrate.

The nations cannot well avoid finally seeing it in this light if they are called upon to give the matter sober thought. If the Hague Congress presents to the world a complete arbitration treaty—if it dares to—drawn for all nations alike, making war as criminal as the murder

which it is, making it obligatory upon every signer, on the appeal of any nation with which there is a difference, to refer the question without reservation to the Hague Tribunal, I believe the treaty will be signed—after the first shock of opposition has passed—and every nation will at once become both sheriff and police, to keep the peace and enforce the law. The only possible result will be that wars will cease unto the end of the earth, that the bow will be broken, the spear cut in sunder, and the chariot burned in the fire.

Is it impossible? Why is it impossible? The little lad's question comes back to me—

“Papa, why is perpetual peace impossible?”



THOUGHTS ON LIBERTY

BY ELBERT HUBBARD

SAFETY lies in the balance of power.

People good enough for self-government have it.

The old world may be wrong, but it cannot be righted in a day.

Independence in men or in nations is an achievement, not a bequest.

Humanity enjoys more freedom to-day than ever before since the world began.

There is only one thing worth fighting for, talking for, writing for, and that is freedom.

Every government exists by the consent of the governed, and people get about the kind of government they deserve.

If some men had not questioned the justice of the law and defied the law, there would be to-day no such thing as freedom.

The law in America is for the people, of the people, and by the people, and when this is not the case the people are themselves to blame.

We are all just getting rid of our shackles. Listen closely anywhere, even among honest and intellectual people, and you can detect the rattle of chains.

For the first time in the history of the world, it is the general feeling of mankind that freedom of thought and speech is a good thing, and that the masses can safely be trusted with it.

No power is great enough to bind the mind—thought forever escapes. Give civil liberty to all, not by approving all religions, but by permitting in patience what Providence allows.

ENTER, A LADY

By Will Levington Comfort

Author of "The Fortress."

LARNED left Kieth's offices at five o'clock Saturday afternoon with seventy-one thousand dollars. Two hundred dollars of this amount was due him at Kieth's—an item of salary. At six on that soft summer evening, just as the newsboys were shouting the baseball extras, the Gulf Limited slipped quietly out of the smoky sheds in Jersey City, and Larned ignited a cigar in the smoking-compartment of one of its Pullmans. Presently he ordered a bottle of mineral water. This is significant. A man who can steal seventy-one thousand dollars without a stimulant is apt to require a deal of catching.

In fast time and without incident, Larned was shot from town to town toward the Rio Grande, which was crossed late Monday. He was not conscious of breathing any easier in the still, hot country below the border. In fact, breathing was scarcely so pleasant, since the season of the rains was passed, and the coaches of the Laredo-Capital Express were not so commodious and dust-proof as those of Texas and above.

Larned liked Mexico—not the country particularly, but the capital, which is built as cities should be, in the form of a square, with attention given to sumptuousness and alignment, and not grown together like the cells of a wart, according to the exigencies of real estate and railroad facilities. Moreover, the City of Mexico enjoys a fair climate, and has appurtenances for withstanding the pressure of heat and the chill of the rains. There is no headlong rush of life there; siestas, rather, and time for courtesy. Few questions are asked, and that heinous offense of civilization, extradition, has no part in the waste of the land.

There is music in the plazas of old Mexico, and poetry in the eyes of the women Spain has left behind. If one cares, there is all the poker in the world, and similar pastimes of peculiar enchantment to those who have settled the bread-and-butter question in the simple and direct way Larned had employed. Consequently, this young New Yorker lost three thousand dollars to a pale man upon whose attenuated face was graven some classic sorrow. Then he lost interest in pips and disks. Indeed, Mexico enjoys the distinction of confining a colony of commercial artists, men of originality and prowess in various channels.

Kieth's, New York, was the eastern cog of the great grain mill of

the Northwest. The old man loved money. Larned had given the millionaire ten years of his life, ten years of splendid and untiring service. He had grown weary of waiting for Kieth to die in order to come into the dictatorship which he believed his own honor and acumen had earned.

The New York papers of the Monday following the Saturday of flight bore no news of the steal. "That's like Kieth, the old lion. It broke his heart, but did n't wring a squeal out of him," Larned said warmly. The journals of Tuesday and Wednesday eventually reached Mexico, but contained no word of the deficit of man and money. Thursday's papers, however, announced that David Larned, one of the Kieth cashiers, had gone west on a business trip and would be absent several weeks.

"I can see old Kieth telling the reporters all about my trip," Larned mused. "He's using the papers to inform me that I may come back if I bring seventy-one thousand."

Apparently, then, Kieth was the only man in New York who knew that he was a defaulter. Larned may have undergone emotions which did not show upon his face. Incidentally, he was a rare man to look at, this addition to the sans-extradition colony in the old capital of renaissance architecture and abounding battle-grounds. His face was finely-cut, controlled like an oriental's, and upheld by a figure that would have been called a masterpiece at West Point. Strangely enough, he had a brain, too, a rounded appreciation for books and pictures of the better sort, and a healthy scorn for the slavery of large possessions—outside of business hours. In point of years, he was thirty-one, and reasonably whole in body and brain, save for the single lesion, the moral defect which makes possible this tale.

Excellent Larned! He learned in three weeks what many inferior men preach in their college eras—that a man of health, with a ten years' habit of action behind him, and his veins full of aggressive corpuscles, cannot sit still and be a mere spectator of world events. He invites his past Karma, as they would say in the east, which means that Mother Nature takes a hand in his case. Idle, he is a law-breaker in her sight. She either uses his powers somehow, or condemns them to decay.

As has been stated, Larned did not care to gamble in such classy company. This, moreover, would put him on an equal footing with certain haggard and charming gentlemen who had delved too deeply into the woe of living. And had not the pale man with the green eye-shade and the lady-like hands already shown how simple it would be to garner the new-comer's harvest to the gleanings? No, the law of cause and effect dealt with Larned in a more subtle and elegant way than through mere games of chance.

Enter, a lady. Also an aunt of the lady. The elder of the travelling companions was an artless person of fifty, who seemed continually frightened into graciousness, and who spoke English, but appeared afraid to exercise the gift. As a chaperon she was the most glad some and distinguished failure that ever rested lightly upon the conscience of a genuine girl. Miss Mary Vinehouse of New York, doing Mexico, was a ruddy young woman whom Mexico became regally. All the dull tints of the mountains and the ancient highways warmed vividly in her presence. She was brimming with life and color and entrancing hesitations.

Let it be known that there was the tiniest mole on the witching cheek of Miss Vinehouse; and that it also became her, like the audacious little squares of court-plaster our blessed foremothers wore. Nothing in the world could possibly be compared to the blushing of the young lady—save a sunrise on an extraordinary morning.

The pomp of Mexico came to pay its devoirs to the aunt and Miss Vinehouse. Larned remained. When it was intimated that the two ladies had travelled considerably about this planet, Roden, the pale gambler king, remarked that the men of other empires were blind, if the sun ever set upon the Vinehouse dominions.

For days and days Miss Mary and Larned had strolled and saddled over the rising trails and the silent battle-grounds. Their ways were the ways of history. . . . Here in the mangoes a treacherous aide had slain his general, the great Quesada; yonder the shells of the rebel Dalbros had broken the city walls. Over this white highway the treasure of the Sierra Madre had been carried—tons of silver, which softened the strength and tainted the valor of Spain. Along this cactus-lined road the wife of a former dictator had fled to the enemy, because a lover beckoned. (Larned whispered the story as they rode, and tossed coins to the imploring beggars in the dust.) The dictator had followed with his staff. Here where the poinsettia flames—bright blood of passion—he had overtaken the woman in her lover's arms. His men had begged him to be merciful, for she was the empire's darling. In the twilight the vultures had finished tearing the lover's body apart, and the two armies locked horns.

Old Mexico is the new world's Mother India. Those who ride may read the document of her past on the league-long slopes, but ever the fine print of peace is blurred and blotted by the red flaring type of wars. To the annals, the man and woman inscribed their names in the volume, Romance, but the heart of each was ill at ease.

"Mary," he said, as they rode in the dusk through the *Calle Cervantes* toward the hotel, "it has been a beautiful month, but how can I go over those trails again—when you are gone?"

"Don't you think——?" She halted. A dismayed look came into her eyes.

"What is it, Mary?" he whispered.

"But are you going to stay here always?"

"The silver is not yet exhausted from the Mexican hills," he said, with bitterness. His inner sense arraigned him cruelly now for gambling away a portion of his capital. If the seventy-one thousand were still intact, he might yet have repurchased his name. The face of Larned, which had been well nerved and smiling when life and liberty hung in the scale, was tense and blood-drawn now. Day after day this blithe girl had woven her nature into his life—a life in which the potentialities of romance had never before burned masterfully.

His brain, in all its gropings, found only more exquisite torment. There was nothing but self-mortification in the thought that had he known her before, had he even passed this woman on the street, he could never have done the thing which now bound him to the slow-grinding Wheel of Mexico. He had the audacity to believe that she was for him—to dream that she might even have taken him with the horrid provisions of dishonor and eternal exile, had he been savage enough to ask her to be his wife. And since he did not ask her—though they had read and ridden and whispered together—what could she think but that he only fancied her for a month of Mexico? What could she do in sweetness and delicacy—but to go away?

"We have already stayed longer than we intended in Mexico," she said coldly. Then, in the miraculous fashion which enchanted him, her whole demeanor changed, as she added softly, "Would n't it be splendid if you were going north with us?"

During the dinner-hour that evening, Larned paced his room. He would put this bright, brave girl from him. He had dealt with her falsely, even to the name she knew him by. Full in his vigor, pride, and serenity, the knife had fallen. He would take his medicine, sit tight, and say good-by. He could not go back to Kieth with sixty-seven thousand dollars when he had stolen seventy-one. Being a thief, he was not to know the beauty of marrying the girl he loved. He could not tell the truth, because strangely, beyond words, he desired her memory of him to keep sweet. He would remain with Mother Mexico and starve his heart to death. Thus he pondered, but the king-hope of one's life is not so easily destroyed. Men have stood off their humanity for an ideal more often in books than in the field; more often in the orient, where there is more soul-age, than in America, the bright academy of carbines and currency.

Larned strode below, but she called him to the veranda. The delightful aunt went away on some pretext, and the two were alone in a night of Mexico's own painting.

"I thought perhaps you would dine with us—this last evening," she said.

"Some mail demanded attention," he answered, warping another lie into the hateful fabric. Without speaking, they walked among the fountains and flowers of the hotel plaza. Her presence was agony to him. To-morrow he would be Larned, cold as a fish, dead forever, and she would be travelling northward where free men lived. The night was fragrant and warm as the touch of a hand. The mountains were jewel-tipped in the moonlight, and native guitars were dripping melody from the upper balcony, where candles glistened among the palms.

"Mary," he said desperately at last, "please meet me here in a half-hour. I have something to tell you then, perhaps—but something to do first! Will you be here?"

"Yes," she answered.

Larned hastened into the hotel. Roder was in the dining-room. The former shuddered as he approached the gaunt, ashen face which no wine could flush, the face of the gambler who had never cried, "Limit," and who had been as unbreakable as Monte Carlo in his twenty years of Mexico.

"Sit down, my friend, and have a glass of Esperante," said Roder. "You look drawn rather fine. Why don't you come over and talk books and pictures with me, as you used to? I hope you don't think you have to gamble because you enter my apartments."

"No, but I want to gamble to-night."

The other glanced at him keenly. "I suppose you want to go away," he said quietly.

"How do you know that?" Larned demanded.

"I have lived here long, my friend. Men come to me to repair their mistakes—so they can go away. I am ready. Shall we go up-stairs?"

The Roder apartments are remembered by certain men more sharply than the many mountain profiles of old Mexico. Roder said that he was particular about the place he was to die in, and spent a small fortune upon his living-rooms. Teak, crystal, old books and paintings, fresh flowers, the tapestries of the Moors, water-jugs of Persia, chairs of Kelmscott and pottery of Wedgworth, carven ivory and lacquered irises of Japan—a soft, dreadful place, vitalized by the cunning of every zone, and mystic with a view of fairest moonlit Mexico from the casement.

"What is the simplest way for me to take away seven thousand dollars of yours, Mr. Roder, or to leave that amount?" Larned asked.

"The turn of a card, my friend; but let me ask if you are aware that the chances of the Unseen World are against you. Do you know

that Mother Nature does not approve of a man writhing out of a difficulty—through the turn of a card?"

Larned nodded impatiently. Roder drew his check-book and filled a blank, then broke the seal of a fresh card package.

"I stood where you stand—twenty years ago," the latter said. "I lost. We shall miss you if you win."

"I have the currency," said Larned. "Those cards are shuffled enough. I want a red card of any value. Black you win."

"Turn," said Roder. . . . "Heart! Ah, believe me, my friend, I congratulate you with all my heart! Must you hurry away? . . . Write me how Old Trinity stands the strain of staring down the dollar-gorge—ah, New York, New York! Write to a lonesome old man, won't you, boy? I lost—twenty years ago."

Larned gripped his hand and hurried below. Out in the dimness among the rhododendrons, he perceived the woman standing.

"Mary," he whispered ardently, his face close to hers, "I have made arrangements to go north with you to-morrow!"

For an instant Larned thought she had swooned. A moment afterward, however, laughing faintly and clutching his sleeve, Miss Mary explained that she had not been well during the day—that her aunt feared she was suffering from fever.

"And then," she added huskily, "I was surprised and glad to hear—that you are going north with us!"

The next day they set out for the north together—a strange journey. The mystery of the girl's mind challenged the sentient man, but he could not fathom her silences, her nervous rebellions, her sudden moods of tenderness. There was a little book of the heart which she had not opened for him, nor would she, he concluded, until he had played the man and sued for a bride. This was impossible until a certain malignant old man in New York had healed the exile's integrity. But there were moments, too, on the journey—at least it seemed so to him—when the currents of romance moved with a gay and merry swing, and they were mates, a gorgeous mated pair, playing two games of love—one for the world and the aunt (who was in a splendid humor), and another, of esoteric phases, for each other.

As those who have sought the warm wings of Mother Mexico in great trouble know very well, there are two Laredos. The Rio Grande flows between, and somewhere in the centre of the current is the international line. Larned planned to pass over the line that night into the hunting-grounds of his enemies, and to make his way quietly with the woman to New York, trusting in his recouped possessions to warm the heart of Kieth to mercy. He did not think that the old millionaire would throw good money after bad, to the extent of hiring a border patrol to complicate the return of his ex-cashier.

Laredo in the dusk, the Mexican Laredo, and the Rio Grande flowing red from the western sky! Across the big river sparkled the lights of the Texas city. A tremulous sigh came from the woman. As Larned glanced quickly into the face of Miss Vinehouse, she covered her eyes with her hand, and the hand was trembling.

"Twenty-minutes stop on this side of the river!" the brakeman had called. Through the open windows of the coach came a bedlam of sounds—the cries of Mexican venders. Larned suggested that they move out on the platform, and the younger woman assented eagerly.

"Put a wrap about you, Mary," said the aunt. "I shall not feel sure that you have escaped fever until we are safe in the States again."

The two pressed through the crowd at the door of the coach, passed off the station platform, the girl leading the way along the sandy road toward the little city. They were a considerable distance from the train when he said at last:

"Perhaps we had better not go any further. It was quite a while ago that the brakeman called."

She hesitated strangely. Larned caught her by the arm and led her back toward the train. The conductor shouted, "All aboard!" as they reached the station platform. The aunt screamed to them from the window of the coach. Miss Vinehouse turned at last to Larned, commanding in an intense but broken tone:

"You must not cross the river to-night! Leave us here—good-by!"

She turned from him and ran to the step of the coach, but Larned followed.

"Hurry, both of you! Mary is beside herself!" cried the elder woman, now from the platform of the coach. Her words were directed toward Larned, and the face and voice were not like those of the chaperon he had known.

The train was moving as the girl gained the step. She turned and put forth her hand to prevent Larned from grasping the rail.

"Don't come with us—in the name of God! If you care for me—don't cross the river to-night!"

The elder woman tried to stifle the other's words with her hand. This act decided Larned. He stepped back and lifted his hat. As he did so, the face of the aunt was jerked into the light. It was a marvel of fury.

Larned repaired to the little hotel of the Mexican town and weighed the various attractions and repulsions of his mind. He realized a tithe of the truth. In all likelihood, the elder woman was an agent of Kieth's, and Miss Vinehouse had been employed to aid in the work of attracting him across the border. Larned smiled because he had deflected the magnet. That smile is one of the few unpleasantries of

the case in point. The commanding fact did not alter for an instant. however. His world was darkness and chaos without the woman. He wrote out the following telegram addressed to Kieth, New York:

Broke training. Have just come out of aberration, seventy-one thousand dollars in my possession probably yours. Am shipping the amount, via express package.

He did not do this out of love for Kieth, but because Mother Mexico and a woman had taught him that liberty to walk this world and wear his own name is worth any price a man can pay.

The telegram was still in his hand, however, when a messenger entered the hotel, inquiring for him. Larned read the following hastily-written note from "the aunt" across the river:

Come over as soon as you can. We have been unable to go on to-night. Mary is dangerously ill at the International.

He was not blind to the fact that this was doubtless a last volley from the guns of his enemies, but the art of the thing made him afraid—deathly afraid that the words might be true. Before deciding his course, he determined to file his message to Kieth. That would stand as evidence of his intent in any case. He started across the street to the telegraph office. His name was called. It was Miss Vinehouse, of dangerous illness, approaching hurriedly.

"I was afraid to trust a messenger to reach you in time," she panted. "I heard the officers and that woman planning to lure you across the river in my name."

"Thrice-blessed lady!" he murmured raptly.

"I can be frank with you, at last," she said quickly. "Please don't think that I sympathize with what you have done."

Her tone sent a gust of dead polar coldness into Larned's brain.

"I found at the last moment that I could not play Delilah—not even for a generous emolument," she went on. "If they had captured you to-night, it would have been my fault, because it was I who brought you here to the border. And so I came again to warn you. . . . You may as well know all. I was acquainted with Kieth and needed a position. He sent me to Mexico in charge of that woman, but I did not understand, or only vaguely, that I was to use whatever feminine attractions I possess—you see, I am quite frank—to draw a defaulter to a place where arrest was possible."

"You have been very generous to me," he said.

"You were—different from the defaulter I pictured," she explained in a dull voice. "I rebelled against the work, but that demon-woman threatened to abandon me in Mexico without money or transportation.

I thought I would fail any way, and I was glad—until the night you asked me to meet you in the plaza. To-night, at the last moment, our walks and rides came back to me, and I—it was not in me to let you cross the river. I think I could have been harsh enough to do the part they asked of me, had you been so dishonorable as to forget that you were under a cloud—had you asked me to marry you! That is all. A local train leaves the other Laredo in an hour. I'm going to take it, to get away from her! It is best that you understand—everything! Good-by, Mr. Larned."

He did not quite understand—everything. His vanity was engaged with the gritty fact that he would have been delivered into the toils, had he not possessed the delicacy to remember in her presence that he was a thief.

"Won't you wait just a moment?" he asked pitifully. "It is rather hard to realize that in all those rides and walks you were playing a game—while I fought back the words that would have made your work easier."

"Let us not talk of that—please!"

"Won't you read this telegram?" he whispered. "I was about to send it to old Kieth when I heard your voice—*your voice!* Great God! am I not to hear it again?"

She held the paper to the light of the window. "But can you—have you the whole amount?" she questioned swiftly.

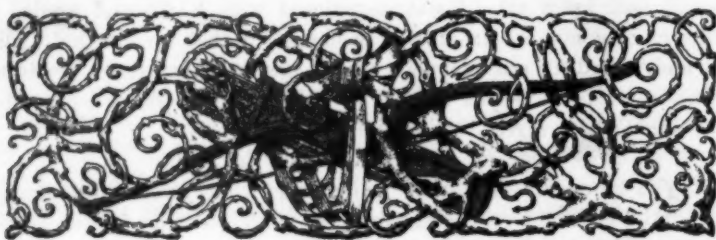
"Every dollar, and the express office is still open!"

"I am glad indeed—for you!"

"Listen," he whispered vehemently. "It was a vile thing that I did, but Kieth vampirized ten good years of mine. Reparation is easy there, but, Miss Mary, tell me, please—I've got to know—before you go—if I may not some time—be a clean man to you?"

Having finally split upon the rock of his imperfections, Larned was bruised, dazed.

"I must hurry now—to catch my train," she said unsteadily. "And you, too, must go quickly—before the express office closes! Good-night."



A PERSONALLY CONDUCTED ADVENTURE

By Captain Lloyd Buchanan

"AN ex-Yale captain," said Elizabeth, "should *never* say die."
"The devil!" I answered politely, looking out across the lake at the vanishing cat-boat with the red sweater in the stern. "What good does that do me? Hadn't a man better be a white-fingered banjo strummer?"

I admit I am rather proud of the fact that it was my team that thrashed Harvard so prettily three years ago; but Frieda didn't stack that sort of thing up as much of an asset beside Bobbie's parlor tricks and exquisite ties. Bobbie is a mighty decent sort, too—I have to admit that. There's no use in short-weighting the fellow in the opposite corner. And, of course, he was head over heels in love with Frieda. Every male I knew under eighty was that, it seemed to me. But men are such rum dogs in point of honor. They won't shoot a bird you flush, or whip a hole you find, or sneak you out of a horse bargain; but every last jack of them will come baying down on the trail of the girl you love as soon as they catch the scent.

I explained this to Elizabeth as we walked back from the pier. Elizabeth is my sister-in-law.

"I know," she said, "but, Mac, that's half the nicest part of it. You wouldn't want Frieda to drop at your feet like an—like an over-ripe—pumpkin—would you?"

"Pumpkins don't drop," I answered severely; "and as for 'niceness,' any way Frieda comes is nice enough for me. Elizabeth, I haven't any show. I've knocked around too much with men to be interesting. I can't fetch Frieda with a shotgun or a bamboo rod. If I could get her in the woods, now——"

"H'm!" said Elizabeth.

When Elizabeth says "H'm!" that way there is apt to be something doing.

"What is it?" I asked anxiously.

"Mac," answered Elizabeth, "can you cook?"

I looked at her in amazement.

"Can you cook—plain food, eggs and coffee and bacon and—things?" she repeated.

"Of course I can," I said. "Haven't I trekked alone over half the Wyoming goat country? But I *can* afford a maid—if that's what's holding her back," I added grimly. "What are you driving at, anyhow?"

"Mac," replied Elizabeth, "you go on like a good boy and play billiards. I have a great idea."

She ran up the hotel steps without another word, but at the top she turned and laid her fingers on her lips and smiled at me. There was a twinkle in her blue eyes that somehow lit a corresponding twinkle in my blue heart. I forgot that Frieda had gone sailing with Bobbie Burke, and I did play a great game with old Major Harcourt. I remember that I ran twenty-eight at the break, which is pretty good shooting, I think.

But Frieda treated me abominably at the hop that night. She only saved me four dances, in the first place; and then she sat out the last of them with a new man from Louisville. When that happened I crawled off to the porch and lit my pipe, and leaned against a post, looking out at nothing. I was so miserable that I couldn't even want to die horribly—as I usually did—so that Frieda would be sorry. Elizabeth found me there.

"Mac?" she asked.

"Yes," I growled.

"Sit down here by me," she said, seating herself on a settee. "I want to talk to you."

I knocked the ashes out of my pipe, and threw myself beside her.

"Elizabeth," I said, "I wish I was out of it all. I've a mind to go to South Africa. Hanged if I haven't! It's no use. She doesn't care a rap."

Elizabeth laughed softly.

"Oh, you goose!" she said, and patted me on the arm. "Now, you pay attention to what I say."

In five minutes I relit my pipe.

"Elizabeth," I said, "you're a brick. I would kiss you—only, I've been smoking." I did kiss her once—when she was married. It was mighty nice then, but I've never gotten farther than threatening since.

"It will be perfectly proper, you see," she said—she didn't mean kissing. "Even a chaperon is supplied. I hope, though, Mac, the bugs won't be bad."

"I'll fix the bugs," I said. "Oh, Elizabeth——" I choked for want of words.

"That's all right," she answered. "Now, you go in and dance with that pretty Ethel Harcourt—three times, at least. Do you understand?"

"But——" I began.

"Neyer mind me," she said; "I'm going to sit here with the moon a while myself."

Isn't she a corker? I did dance—four—with the little Harcourt. I was so happy I just bubbled—and five times I caught Frieda's eyes fixed on me in pained surprise. That didn't make me feel any worse, either.

When Stuart had shaved me in the morning I gave him a five dollar bill.

"Stuart," I said, "without any one's knowing what you are about, I want you to buy me two dozen fresh eggs, a couple of pounds of bacon, a pound of sugar, two pounds of butter, a tin of sweet chocolate, three dozen breakfast rolls, some salt and pepper, and an old frying pan and coffee pot that look as if they had been used a great deal. Be with them down around the point, where they can't see you from the hotel, at one sharp this afternoon."

"Yes, sir," said Stuart, without even a question in his eyes. That's the great thing about Stuart. If I said: "Stuart, bring me a whale on toast," Stuart would say: "Yes, sir," and for dinner I would have my leviathan, oil and all. I picked up Stuart in Gibraltar. The police, I believe, were after him for something or other at the time. I feel that this introduction is necessary, as Stuart becomes a pirate before I get through, and I want it understood that his fall was not entirely due to my influence.

A few minutes before one I carried my fishing traps and some thick Scotch rugs down to my canoe, and paddled in a leisurely way around the point. I had chosen my time well. Every one else was dressing for lunch.

Stuart stood waiting for me with his purchases, which he handed to me in silence.

"Get in," I said. He stepped deftly aboard, and I pushed off swiftly to the south'ard. For some five miles we hugged the shore, where we were inconspicuous against the forest. Then I headed across the sunlit water, and beached on Donkey Island, which lies a thousand yards from the mainland. It is rough, densely wooded, and famous for nothing in particular. Leaving Stuart with the canoe, I carried the battered old skillet and coffee pot into the interior and hid them under a rock. Then I returned.

"Stuart," I said, "I am going to leave you here."

"Yes, sir," said Stuart.

"About four o'clock or so two ladies—Mrs. Macdonald and Miss Brooke—will come to this island. They will leave their canoe on the beach and go into the woods. You will remain hidden until they are well out of sight. You will then undress——"

"Undress, sir?" asked Stuart.

"I said 'undress,'" I answered tartly. It was the first time he had ever so disappointed me. "You will put your clothes in the canoe, and swim with it to the mainland. Keep on the far side of it, so you won't be seen. When you reach shore, make fast in the brush, and walk home as best you can. You will never mention this to any one. Do you understand?"

"Yes, sir," said Stuart, accepting the status of felony without question or expression. I almost forgave him for his break about disrobing.

I paddled to the mainland, hid my canoe in the bushes, and made myself comfortable with my rugs on the bank. I had a book, but I did not read. It was too infinitely sweet to lie there puffing my pipe, and watch through the smoke the green island in the blue lake—and think of all that might happen there in the next twelve hours.

The shadows had started to slant long across the water before the canoe I watched for flashed into sight around the bend, and headed for the island. I could just make the girls out. Elizabeth was handling the paddle. She is as good at that as she is at everything else. Frieda was sitting idly with her chin on her hands, looking at the sunset. I searched the beach ahead of them for signs of Stuart, but he was nowhere to be seen.

The tiny craft darted forward, and made the shore at the point I had left. The girls got out, and fluttered for a moment—two specks of white—against the pines. Then they vanished.

For a space there was no sign. Then came another splotch, light colored on the dark background—my pirate was at work. Even while I held my breath, the canoe crawled slowly from the shore, and crept towards me in the crimson path of the dying sun. Laughing out loud, I bundled up my traps back into the woods to a trout hole I knew, some thousand yards away.

By dusk I had half a dozen beauties, running at about three-quarters of a pound, and I put back to my canoe. There were no signs of life on the island, which stood out vaguely in the thickening twilight. Already the stars were peeping from the sky. Night had begun in earnest, yet by tough fighting I fidgeted away half an hour more before I slipped from the brush and paddled slowly across the open.

I was still two hundred yards out when I heard a call—Elizabeth's voice:

"Hullo, there!"

"Hullo!" I shouted back. "Where are you?"

"On the island!" trembled the answer in a voice that made my heart jump like a scared rabbit. Poor little Frieda! Was it really as bad as that?

I drove ahead, and in a few seconds I was on the beach, with Elizabeth holding one of my hands and Frieda gripping the other.

"What on earth——?" I began, pulling as long a face as I could.

"Oh!" cried Frieda brokenly, "Elizabeth and I came out here for some balsam—and our canoe b-broke loose—and f-floated away. I'm so glad to see you. I r-really am. I was so f-frightened in the d-dark."

She gave a little gulp that made me feel like a murderer.

"You can't imagine *my* feelings," I said—which was more true than was at all necessary. "Now, what can we do about it all?"

We talked it over thoroughly, sitting in a bunch there on the moss, very hungry, with the chill night wind blowing across the water and making us shiver. My canoe would hold only two. They couldn't risk the trip by themselves in the dark. They wouldn't hear of my leaving them to get help. So in the end we decided to camp there overnight, and make the best of it until daybreak.

"I'll see if I can't rustle you a bit to eat," I said, "and make you a little comfy."

"He's sort of used to the woods, you know," Elizabeth remarked naïvely.

I brought a few armfuls of dry pine, and built a roaring fire on the beach. Then I dragged up my rugs, and spread Frieda and Elizabeth out on them in the cheerful heat.

"Isn't he a dear?" Frieda said, with a smile that spilled all the bitterness out of my heart and filled it with honey. "Oh, I'm so glad you came!"

"You've never been in the woods overnight before?" I asked her.

"Never," she answered. "I'm a very poor Robinson Crusoe."

"Then," I said, "if I can find something to cook with, you shall have a real supper *à la* desert island."

A search developed—amid great enthusiasm—an ancient skillet and coffee pot—left by some prehistoric camper under a rock! The rolls and trout and their attendant train I modestly introduced from my canoe, with the statement that I always carried such articles when I went fishing. In a few moments the pot was steaming merrily, and the air was rich with the fragrance of trout and bacon sizzling in the venerable skillet.

"Oh," sighed Frieda peacefully, "I'm just—*awfully*—contented!"

So, with the stars over us, and the red fire dancing against the black pines, we sat about on logs, sipping chocolate from patent collapsible drinking cups, nibbling hot, buttered French rolls, and picking over trout flavored with the most approved Chicago bacon, to be sure—yet feeling ourselves drifting swiftly away from the conventional modern into the savage unshorn. Then I saw the true wisdom of Eliza-

beth's scheme. There is enough of the wild thing in us to make a woman naturally want protection from a man in the dark woods—and to open her heart to a fire and supper there in a way she never would do to a palace and a course dinner in town.

Yet the talk, in a little, lagged, and some three pipes after the last bone was scraped Elizabeth—yawned. I made her a shelter, thatched with pine, by the fire, and within I built a sweet couch of balsam, over which I threw the rugs.

"There," I said, "if the Sandman *will* scratch on your windows." Elizabeth rose.

"You young things," she said, "can sit and talk. I am going to sleep, as becomes a chaperon." And she left us.

We sat by the blazing logs a little, not saying overmuch ourselves, until Frieda suddenly stood up.

"Let's go and look at the lake," she said. "It will be perfect now."

I arose eagerly, and we made our way out of the circle of the fire down to the beach. Overhead, the stars shone brilliant in the dark sky. Behind was the ink-black forest; before, the rippling water, bounded only by the night. A faint wind came from the lake, whispering through the pines. The great loneliness of nature murmured about us. Instinctively we drew closer together until our shoulders touched.

"It is so wonderful," said Frieda softly.

"So wonderful," I repeated.

There was another pause.

"I—I am glad you came," she said. "I was—terribly afraid."

"You aren't now?" I asked.

"No," she answered simply.

"Frieda," I said.

She did not answer, but I heard her draw her breath sharply, and she turned her head away. I put my hand on hers. It fluttered there in a frightened way, but she did not take it from me.

"Do you trust me?" I asked.

"You oughtn't to ask me that," she said.

"I love you," I answered.

She said nothing, and I went on. It seemed a caddish trick to Elizabeth, but I could not lie in the face of the night. The words came whether I would or not.

"Dear," I said, "this is all a lie. I stole your canoe. I did all this on purpose. I—I wanted you to let me take care of you—once—when you needed care—to see if it wouldn't make you—want me to do it always. I am so ashamed—Frieda—dear—won't you forgive me—Frieda?"

She drew away her hand.

"I am glad," she said; "but I—I knew it all the time. When I got—frightened—before you came, Elizabeth told me. I made her promise not to let you know—I knew."

I felt the red mount to my face.

"Then," I said, "you've just been making a—joke of me all evening."

"Weren't you trying to make a joke of—me?" she asked.

"But I love you," I answered. "That's a reason, anyhow."

"Maybe——" she said.

"Maybe what?" I asked.

"Nothing," she answered so low that I could hardly catch it.

"Maybe what?" I repeated.

She raised her beautiful head, and in the starlight I could see her eyes looking straight at me.

"Do you think you needed all this excuse?" she said.

"Excuse for what?"

"Excuse"—again her voice sank to a murmur, and she turned her head away—"to—to—oh, Mac!" she said, "to take care of me?"

And in about two hours we went in and woke Elizabeth up, and told her all about it.



LONGING

BY NANCY BYRD TURNER

I T'S lonely since you left me, dear;
The hours go silent shod;
I wait in vain to hear
A stir where once you trod.
Days—days—days—
And never your footsteps come:
Oh, that I knew a call for you
To turn your wanderings home!

It's weary watching for you, love;
The twilight is a ghost;
The shadows breathe and move,
Sighing of something lost:
Dark—dark—dark—
And never your face for light,—
Divided . . . Nay, a world away;
Heart of my heart, good night!

MR. CARTER FEELS HIS OATS

By Sarah Chichester Page

I

THIS was several years ago—when I was hopelessly young and very cruel.

There is only one thing more cruel than the hazing of a school-boy, and that is the treatment a man grown gets from a school-girl—if she has the chance. He thinks of her as a timid, innocent creature, to be protected, encouraged, and indulged. She regards him as her natural prey—the big game she must learn to stalk. That he could feel pain of any sort, never could occur to her mind.

I was sixteen, and had come home from school for a long summer holiday, my head quite filled with a "University man," Dick Caperton—eighteen years old, with crisp waves in his hair, a pair of broad shoulders, and all sorts of fun in his gray eyes. He was coming to stay in the neighborhood, and the summer looked all rose color and gold to me. His fraternity badge throbbed just over my heart; I received an impassioned note from him every day, and sent him one, only one degree cooler, every other day.

There was a world to do at Newington to get ready for the summer's campaign. Besides my frocks to be gone over and lengthened, my horse must be gotten into shape. Uncle Henry had to pull her mane and get her coat in order. When one is at school, nobody thinks of doing more than keeping her well fed and watered.

Then I had the rose garden to attend to every morning and evening: clipping off the "dead heads" and gathering roses for the vases and for the house linen. Besides, there was the raspberry vinegar to make—and so many other things.

All the time papa kept worrying me about old Mr. Carter. He was a very nice old gentleman—forty-five, if he was a day. Almost as old as papa, though he did n't know it, apparently.

He had lost his wife during the past winter, and papa thought his loneliness most pitiable. He begged him to come to Newington as often as possible. And, in truth, Mr. Carter took very kindly to that idea, and came—in season and out of season.

Whenever he came papa felt that he must give up everything to sit by his friend and show all sympathy with such grief and bereavement.

But Mr. Carter had other notions.

They were sitting on the back porch one day, papa striving to be particularly genial and attentive, with a view to consolation. He called me in from the garden.

"Betty, come make us a julep. Henry brought in some mint just now. Bring out the silver goblets—and let's get a good frost on them. Wipe the ice dry in the napkin after you crush it, child, or it will wash away. And now just a spray of mint on top—the young leaves—and don't bruise them, for the mint is only for the scent of the nostrils; one should never taste it. No, Robert, she does n't like it—it's only for us old fellows." Putting down his goblet with exasperation, "Who is that calling me, Betty? Am I never to have one minute's peace?"

I told him 't was the foreman, who wanted him to ride down to the lower field to see if the hay was in condition to be cut.

"Tell him I'll be there in a minute, Betty;" and then, following me down the hall out of hearing, "I do hate to leave that poor fellow—he seems particularly sad to-day. I really believe he can't stay at home; the memories there are so bitter. You sit with him awhile, Betty. I hate to go, but you see how it is. Thompson does n't know whether it is dry enough to cut the timothy this evening. I won't be a moment longer than I can help. Keep him cheered up—keep him cheered up—I'll soon be back." Then calling to the stable, "Bring Rocket up to the back gate, Henry. I'll mount there."

I returned to the porch, and Mr. Carter sprang up to place a chair for me. He was very big and awkward; he filled a room with his behavior—his exceeding politeness.

This time he struck the table with his foot, overthrowing the empty goblets on the tray, as he bowed me into my seat.

"Ah, Miss Betty, what good fortune took the old man off? Why does he never give me a chance? I declare, since you came to gladden the old state with your winsome face, you never give a fellow time to get in a word with you. I suppose you think we country bumpkins don't know how to appreciate a pretty girl, but I tell you we are better worth while than the silly dudes we see coming up from town. Give us a chance—give us a chance! You'll see I have n't forgotten the old tricks!

"Why, I saw you mount your horse from a *stile* the other day, with two young gentlemen looking on, like ninnies! No lady ever mounted from a stile to go riding with *me*. I tell you, when you put that dainty foot in this hand, you'll fly into your saddle like a bird."

"Of course those boys are not strong, like you, Mr. Carter, and

they will *never* have such perfect manners. Some time you must come and ride to church with me—some Sunday night, when it is cool and we have moonlight.”

There was sheer malice in this. I knew he would rather die than appear in public riding with a girl—and his wife hardly cold in her grave! And, of all places, at church—with all his in-laws, the Meads, smothered in crape for their sister, and glaring at him from the amen corner!

Oh, he was thoroughly enjoying the thought of a return to his oats—he was frisking about like a colt—but he had no intention in the world of being found out. So he evaded my invitation, in some confusion, and when I rallied him upon it he gazed at me in the most sentimental manner, quoting:

“My love, she’s but a lassie yet—
We’ll let her stand a year or two;
She’ll no’ be half sae saucy yet.”

This he repeated several times, with great enjoyment to himself, finally asking me if any of the young bloods knew Burns or Moore, and assuring me that I’d find he knew how to do it as well as any of them—give him the chance! And at last he rose to take his leave, pressing my hand till it ached, and bowing himself backward from the porch at imminent risk of going over the steps—where, indeed, he sent a chair with his last bow.

And twice, as he mounted and rode away, he called back to me, standing on the steps: “‘My love, she’s but a lassie yet,’” chuckling to himself with keenest joy over his performance.

I felt no elation at my conquest. That a man of his age should be guilty of the frivolity of love-making was bad enough. It truly mortified me. Of course I knew there could be no seriousness in it. Not for a moment was I deceived. I knew quite well he cared nothing for me—a child of sixteen. But that he should attempt even a flirtation with me over the fresh grave of his wife filled me with indignation.

I was too loyal to betray him to papa, but I cast about in my mind for some effectual means of putting an end to the affair, without being in any way rude to my father’s friend.

I had been very anxious to have Mr. Carter go, for it was possible that Dick had arrived at the Chapins’ that morning, and would be coming to see me immediately.

The Chapins were Northern people who had bought the old Randolph place, and had made themselves very pleasant to the neighborhood. Unlike the other rich Northerners among us, they were quiet, well-bred people, who, though a trifle formal and heavy, at least did

not shock our sense of decency, or ride rampant over our long established laws of social living.

I suddenly decided it would be a good plan to go fishing down the run. I could choose the hole just where the path comes through the woods from Glenwood, and meet Dick there, if he came across the fields.

It was late in the year for fishing, and quite the wrong time of the day, but what difference did that make, if Dick was coming across the fields? So I flew up-stairs for my short skirt and stout shoes, climbed on a chair to get one of great-grandpa Corbin's snuff boxes off the top shelf in the linen closet (such a splendid thing for fishing worms!), and then called Uncle Henry to dig bait for me.

There were fine fat worms in the asparagus bed, and he filled the snuff-box, while I sat in the garden walk, knitting a new hook on my line.

Finally the capacious pocket of my fishing skirt was packed to suit me, with the snuff-box, an extra bottle cork, a few buckshot, my pen-knife, and all the ginger-cakes it would hold. I put on a white sun-bonnet lined with pink—or, rather, I hung it around my neck, where I could reach it as soon as I heard any one coming—for, though vastly becoming, it was much too hot to walk about in.

I cut a willow switch as I walked past the ice-pond, and in twenty minutes had two shining sun-perch and three chud threaded on it.

I was sitting on the water-gate, under some big oaks, with the bonnet just on the right tilt, when I heard Dick come whistling down the path. It was good to see the surprise and joy in his face when he beheld me. But I went on industriously getting another fish out of the stream, before I had time to give him my hands in greeting.

"Oh, Betty, what luck to find you out here!"—taking the fish off the hook, and threading it on the switch, with its relations.

"Luck indeed, when I've been waiting half an hour for you! Did n't you write me that you hoped to get down on this morning's train?"

"And you knew I would be coming to you before I decently could, after my arrival."

"Oh, yes, I knew that. And I wanted to meet you here—because—well, because I've said so little to papa about you—and just suppose he does n't like you—or you don't care about him? It's a mighty scary time—don't you think so, Dick?"

"No, not a bit of it. But, Betty, it's really lovely to have you meet me here, but—do you think the log of a water-gate is just the most convenient place to sit, when we've got a good deal to do? Here, sit down against this big tree, while I wet my handkerchief for you. No, you can't wash your own hands this time; because they are par-

ticularly fishy and grimy—and because I am not at all certain they are your hands—and because, as I mean to hold them afterwards, I might as well dry them now.”

“But, Dick, don’t you know that’s the timothy field right up the bank behind us? And papa is riding about there with Thompson. So let go my hands—sit properly—and let’s talk about all the things we are going to do.”

“All right—the things we are going to do this week—this summer—and forever and ever, amen. First, to-morrow night: we are going to a dinner at the Chapins!”

“Good gracious!—not I! I never went to a dinner-party in my life.”

“That does n’t matter; you’re to do it this time. Mrs. Chapin told me so just now. Are you afraid of the forks and glasses?”

“No, indeed; I don’t care how many forks they choose to put—we have a pile of them in the silver drawer at home, and one can’t use but one at a time. It is n’t silver and glasses; it’s what on earth to talk about, among those serious, stiff people.”

“Why, Mrs. Chapin told me she wished especially to have Miss Betty, because she was so discreet, so well poised—nothing flippant or hoydenish about her, as with most school-girls! Anyhow, you are to be asked to keep *me* company—the rest are all old folks: your father, the Masons, and a Mr. Carter. Who is he?”

“An old thing—a friend of papa’s. Oh, Dick, hold my hands close, while I tell you something! He has been saying all sorts of foolish things to me. No, don’t look so angry! He is really very old, and his wife died only last Christmas. I know it’s shocking—it’s perfectly *horrid*—but it’s not *my* fault that he will make love to me. . . . Oh, no; he is not serious about it, of course. He just enjoys it like a play—so glad to pretend he is young again, you know.”

“Well, then, I’ll just give him to understand he can play his plays with some other girl. Betty, how *could* you allow it, when you know I’m trusting you! I just believe you *like* it. Girls always do, no matter who it is.”

“Well, he does n’t say mean things like that, anyhow. But don’t row. I’m thinking up a plan to stop him off, and I would n’t have you hurt him for the world. You leave him to me—I’ll settle him. I’m thinking of a plan now. Here, eat these ginger-cakes, and don’t say another word about him.”

And then, leaning against the old oak, we talked about the plans for the whole summer—for all our lives—and forever and ever, amen—while the stream listened with what forbearance it could, having flowed between those banks for some generations, and heard all those things before.

II

I FELT a little awed by the dinner party, because the Chapins were very stately people. They were from somewhere in Massachusetts, and they were exceedingly correct.

But I was chiefly concerned about papa's unwillingness to sit properly through the many courses. He had never a big appetite, and his habit was to satisfy it with the four courses, so that he grew very impatient when he had to wait through what he called the gymnastics of the servants with the china.

The table was laden with silver and flowers and candles, and the menu was a good one; but papa was getting restless—and was dying, I knew, to get out on the lawn with his pipe. Even the gyrations of the English butler had ceased to amuse him. He kept stretching out his long legs restlessly under the table, and when they reached across to me I kicked him, to call him to order.

But of course, outwardly and aboveboard, he was as dignified as the rest.

Dick was dreadfully bored, sitting next to me—much disappointed that he could n't mix me up as to glasses, or make me eat salad with a spoon. Presently he waxed confidential, and whispered: "We all tried a funny stunt the other day at a club supper. Did you know that if you set your back perfectly flat against the back of your chair—touching from top to bottom—you can't reach the table with your toes, no matter how hard you try? I mean it, truly. The most athletic fellows tried it, and it can't be done."

"Nonsense, Dick! Why should n't they? I believe I can."

"You can't, Betty. Nobody can."

"All right; I'll see."

He glanced back, to see that I played fair; and, because he said it was so hard, I kicked my toes up with all my might. And, though he had sworn I could n't, somehow I struck the table just in the middle, under the flowers and candles, and everything on it jumped suddenly in the air and alighted again with a crash. Papa was too astonished to speak, and seemed disposed to think the English butler had exploded.

Mr. Chapin thought it probably a common occurrence at a dinner party in Virginia, and reassured his wife with a glance.

Dick's solemn expression showed he had heard nothing whatever!

Mr. Carter shrewdly suspected the source of the disturbance, and seemed to be racking his brain for some lines beginning, "When Nancy kicked the table o'er," but feared he should be overheard if he attempted them.

After another awful space of time we were on our feet, and Mr. Carter stumbled over Dick (I was not speaking to Dick, and hoped Mr. Carter had killed him), and followed me out to the flower garden.

"Dick Caperton told me to do that," I said hysterically. "He swore I could n't reach the table with my toes."

"No doubt those are the customs and practices in the north, where he goes to school, Miss Betty. But, for heaven's sake, don't cry about it! Nobody knew but I, and I'll never tell on you. You know I would n't—don't you, Miss Betty?"

Here he stumbled into a rosebush, and, stumbling out, seized my hand, exclaiming:

"Oh, gin my love were yon red rose
That grows upon the castle wa',
And I myself a drop o' dew
Into her bonny breast to fa'!"

This was the last straw! I had flown to him for comfort in my disgrace, but this verse was too much for flesh and blood to stand. I felt it an allusion to my little white organdy dinner frock, where was, of course, low neck, but so discreetly cut that there was no danger from drop of dew or anything else falling into it. I recalled my plans for *doing* him—hardened my heart—and began by looking intensely sentimental, while I gazed at the red, red rose he had pulled for me.

"Dear Mr. Carter," I said, "you are so consoling—so different from these boys. If you only knew what a rest it is to me to find myself safe with you! And how in the world do you remember all those lovely ideas? Do you know, I believe they are original with you, after all! You need not deny it! No poet ever lived to write such beautiful and appropriate words for every thought of yours."

"Well, Miss Betty, it's mighty sweet to hear you say that—but I'm afraid we must go in now"—nervously. "They might notice I was talking to you. You know it's dreadfully hard to part—for even a night; it really is; but won't you promise to be at home to-morrow morning, Miss Betty? No, don't be cruel—let me hold it a minute.

As fair art thou, my bonny lass,
So deep in love am I:
And I will love thee still, my dear—
Till all the seas gang dry.

"How's that one? Pretty neat, eh? Oh, I've not forgotten how to do it! Don't the old gentleman go to town in the morning? Well, expect me early, and wait at home for me—here's some one coming, I'm afraid."

I clasped my hands and gazed into his eyes with emotion, whispering: "Do you truly mean that, Mr. Carter? Of course I'll be at home, and you will come early, won't you?"

He looked somewhat bewildered, trying to remember what he had said. Could n't exactly recall it, but it must have been a winner, judging from effects!

Then Dick, who had had a good view from behind a snowball bush, whistled with rage, and kicked the gravel; and Mr. Carter bolted in great terror. The falling chairs marked his return to the veranda.

The next hour was devoted to the annihilation of Dick. Going home, Mr. Carter rode beside our carriage as far as the Newington gate; and papa said: "Robert, what was that infernal row at the dinner table? Did that fool butler 'bust' at last, or was that a spent shell old Chapin had left over from the Wilderness? Anyhow, it certainly cheers us up to go about a little, old fellow. Keep it up. It don't do to spend your life grieving as you do. Come over often, Bob. Good-night—good-night?"

Dick came over before breakfast next morning, and was so deeply penitent that I thought about forgiving him. And then he rehearsed the scene at dinner with such shrieks of laughter that I joined in, and forgave him quite.

Taking advantage of my melting mood, he persuaded me to let him sit on the back porch, just outside the drawing-room window, when Mr. Carter came. He was so anxious to make sure I'd do him up brown. This I thought would be mean—but I *did* want an audience!

Soon after breakfast Mr. Carter was shown into the drawing-room, where I sat, quite ready for him. I had gotten up a very timid expression, turning away my head, consciously, and putting out my hand to him, without rising, as he reached the sofa where I sat.

"Ah, Lady Betty, the hours have been long ones since we parted! May I hope you too have felt them so?"—pressing my hand to his lips. "Tell me how you have passed them."

I kept my eyes on my lap, shut my back teeth tight, to make a blush, and faltered:

"You know it was very late when we went to bed—and—after what you said, I could not sleep much; and then—I had to get up very early. There was—there was—so much to be done."

"To be done?"—looking at me with vague alarm. "What have you been busy about?"

"Well, you see"—becoming more and more covered with confusion—"it was the letters, you know—the girls at school."

"What girls? You don't write to school-girls?"

"Yes—you know, it was our class. We each took a solemn vow at parting that when any girl had a proposal she would write immediately to each of the others. And there were fifteen, scattered about all over the country. And papa started to town so early this morning that it did hurry me so to get them all off."

Poor man! He turned fairly purple with horror and indignation. His lips moved, but I'm quite sure it was not in poetry.

Picking up his hat and gloves and murmuring some excuse, he seemed backing toward the door. "Why, dear Mr. Carter, you've only this minute come! *Must* you go?" I exclaimed, with anxious surprise.

"Indeed I must, Miss Betty. I did not really mean to sit down. I wanted to ride into town with your father."

"Won't you wait for him here, and have a julep on the back porch? Then *good-by*, Mr. Carter. Oh, never mind about the ottoman!"

"Betty," said Dick severely, pulling away three sofa pillows under which I had dived to stifle my laughter, "did the man really propose to you?"

"*Propose* to me!" I exclaimed in horror. "Of course he never did anything like it! I told you he cared nothing in the world for me. Do you suppose I would do such a thing as this to a man who *proposed* to me?"

"I don't know whether you would or not," said Dick doubtfully. "You've got me scared to death."

But I soothed him presently.



A SUMMONS

BY GERTRUDE HUNTINGTON MCGIFFERT

WISTARIAS ripple in purple waves,
 The plum is gay, the cherries blow,
 Gold butterflies doff to the first white rose,—
 So blue the skies and your eyes smile so!

Next springtide, dear, when you pluck the buds,
 My arms will be holden—do not weep!
 In the Everlastingness I'll know,
 And dream of our tryst in the stillest sleep.

GRISSETTES AND MIDINETTES

By Mrs. John Van Vorst

THE little Parisian working-girl of fifty years ago inspired a *chef-d'œuvre* from one of those writers who rise above mediocrity once only and yet remain forever famous. The *grisette* of Henri Murger gained for her and for himself world-wide recognition. To-day her sisters of the later generation are a cause less for poetic inspiration than for sociological research. By the action of economics on this as upon all else that is modern, the touching poetry of the *grisette* has been transformed into the problematic realism of the *midinette*.

The Revolution in France was not a name alone, for, although many of the abuses it contended are still sufficiently extant to be a matter for strife among governors and governed, the violent demonstration in favor of liberty at the end of the eighteenth century so altered the course of events that the history of the nation divides itself into two distinct parts: one before and one after the Revolution. So, before this great civil war in France the life of the artist was in the dependence, to a great extent, of the royal house. The king attached to his service the painters, sculptors, *ébénistes*, *orfevriers*, whom he considered as best able to flatter by their art the imperial images and needs. We owe to this custom the portraits by Clouet which Théophile Gautier describes as the "history of an epoch," the florid compositions of Primaticcio and Rossi, of Lebrun and Coyzevox, Puget's marbles and Nattier's incomparable works, the Boule, the Riesener, and a horde of treasures which, if not inspired by the kings directly, at least were composed under a protecting patronage that insured to the artist a pension for living and a stable position at court.

After the Revolution the entire system, everything, was changed. The very *corps de métier* which by their long apprenticeship and perfected skill constituted a body of unequalled industrial art workers and laborers, were broken up. Napoleon, to be sure, in his imperial rôle, enlisted the services of the painter David after the manner of his royal predecessors, but the times themselves were unfavorable to artists, and the indifference which existed during the Restoration and

later became in the days of Louis Philippe a positive hostility. Then the beginnings of a commercial society, of a *monde* of *bourgeois*, cast more and more severely into disfavor the poor fellow who dreamed of living by the fruit of his talent. The contemptuous business man of 1840 considered that there was only "one thing worse than to be an artist, and that was to be a poet." So artists and poets became social outcasts, the *vie de Bohème* was created to replace the life of the conventional world, and in it, playing an important part—since the man and still less the poet cannot live without consolation—we find the *grisette*. She was the *consolatrice par excellence* of the "poor artist." Her attitude, purely sentimental and disinterested, was that of the woman who, though of humble origin, is, by an instinctive refinement developed through intercourse with a man above her in station, enabled to become his *compagnon de vie*, and who, without expecting that he shall ever bestow upon her his name or his fortune, nevertheless by her love and understanding makes her sacrifice seem the natural means of a mutual happiness.

The *grisette* was the heroine of this romantic world. During the period when the young artist, abandoned by his family, was struggling between fame and bankruptcy, she kept alive the flame which, exposed to the rude atmosphere of the bourgeois world, might have perished.

The severity of judgment manifested by a parent of those days toward a son who had embraced the career of artist is described in the "Vie de Bohème" at the death of Jacques, whose father, having contemptuously disinherited him, remains untouched by his illness under tragic conditions at a miserable hospital, and at the end can scarcely be induced to recover from a pauper's burial the body of his child.

It is not merely the genius of Murger, nor the touching humanity of his characters, that brings tears to our eyes as we read. The *grisette* is more than human; she is the least bit heroic, and she therefore moves us, as do all who by their beauty of character have an element of greatness in them. For let it be remarked that the *vie de Bohème* was the road "to the Academy, to the Hôtel Dieu, or to the Morgue." When these two latter menaced her *bien-aimé* the little *grisette* bestowed upon him all the consolation which it was her joy to give, knowing his need of her. She shared his hunger with a brighter gayety than others share a feast; she lived from hour to hour, happy in that intensity of abandon which reserves nothing for the future. She gave without hope of return, for if by chance renown and glory attended the poet or painter, he passed from her arms into a world whose recognition was compensation enough.

It was this disinterestedness, this grace, this gift of being happy through the making happy of another, which attaches us with a senti-

ment melancholy and tender to the little *grisette* of long ago. She has passed out of existence. The conditions of society which gave place to the humble *modiste* or sewing-girl of those days in the artist life have changed. The *peintre* is a man of the world again, reinstated since the war of 1870, which brought its romantic reaction. He earns, as we Americans are the first to know, enormous prices for his work; his talent is not left to perish unseen, he finds the appreciation and stimulus he needs among the women of his own class, and the sentimental liaison with a *grisette* corresponds no longer to his state of mind.

So the *grisette* has disappeared, and in her place we have the more practical, more prosaic, more modern, and more to be pitied little working-girl, to whom has been given also a nickname which in itself suggests the nature of her existence. She is called the *midinette* (little noon girl). From twelve to one o'clock this laborer has the hour of freedom which counts to the extent of submerging in forgetfulness the ten other working hours of the day. She takes her name, as she takes her personality, from the sixty minutes between twelve and one!

The *midinettes* are recruited for the professions still requiring handwork. Four-fifths of all the working-girls in Paris are needlewomen, or *ouvrières de l'aiguille*. They are distributed in the various *ateliers* where are created the gowns, hats, lingerie, corsets, shoes, which make Paris famous as a centre of fashion. The remaining fifth of the group work upon feathers, flowers, passementerie, and the other accessories which, though made necessarily by hand, are not needlework.

In Paris, or the immediate environs, there are of course "mill hands" among the working-women. But whereas with us the scarcity of labor and consequent high wages make the factory girl rather an aristocrat in the laborer's social scale, working often merely to augment the luxuries of her existence, in Paris the factories are filled with the dregs, the unskilled *ouvrières*, generally widows or women in misfortune, who bear unaided the burden of a family, and work in dire necessity for bread to feed hungry mouths.

There is, on the other hand, a class of young women in Paris that works as our factory girl does: "not because she has to, but because she wants the extra money." She lives in her family, and is contented with wages smaller than any that a man would take, which for this reason are readily offered her by houses where reliability and some instruction are required, as, for example, in the Credit Lyonnais, which employs nine hundred women in the Paris bank alone. This important company, so sure does it wish to be of the character and morality of its employees, makes it a condition of acceptance for these women that they shall live in their own families or in the family of some friend who will act as guardian. But these employees—however interesting the

conditions under which they work—do not come under the head of *midinettes*, and are in no way descendants from the *grisette* of old.

Wise people—or those whom the world fancies worthy of the name—often shrug their shoulders at the wickedness of man, and at the retrogression of humanity in general. If the contemplation of certain aspects of society tends to melancholy conclusions, a contact with the working classes is apt to revive a hopefulness regarding courage and self-sacrifice, endurance and heroism.

As in Paris the fated hour strikes its twelve successive strokes the whole region about the Rue de la Paix, the Avenue de l'Opéra, Rue St. Augustin, Rue du Claire, Du Sentier, St. Denis, and Montmartre, becomes thronged with the *midinettes*. They form no sad procession. Their simple black frocks are relieved by a bow of colored ribbon or a line of white at the throat, but it is not upon such modest toilettes that they count to give them their little triumphant air. All their *science de femmes* in matter of *mode* is applied to the skilful arranging of their hair. They are *coiffées* to perfection, and under this natural crown, which takes the place of a hat and adds a beauty no hat could give, there is a face, wan sometimes, pale and marked too clearly by the hand of toil, but lighted always with a smile. Indeed, so gay is the *midinette*, and so evidently is happiness the strain of her nature, that she drives all thought of misery from one's mind as the sunshine dispels the threatening clouds.

And yet her misery is great!

To eat and drink and clothe oneself on the meagre earnings of the *ouvrière de l'aiguille* is a problem too often insoluble. There are, alas, those who exchange one sort of suffering for another, the physical for the moral; but the wonder we may ever feel at weakness is dissipated by a consideration of what an "honest life" means for one of those working-girls.

The following figures are eloquent. They have been selected from numerous similar accounts kept by the *midinette*, and testify sufficiently that behind her pale, smiling face there is a soul with something of the heroic in it.

Here, first of all, is an itemized account for a year of the expenses of a little seamstress whose earnings amounted to exactly ten dollars a month—ten dollars!

| | |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Rent | \$32.00 |
| Two dresses | 4.00 |
| Making up of dresses | 2.40 |
| Four pairs shoes | 4.00 |
| Two hats | 1.20 |
| Three chemises | 1.20 |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| Two nightgowns | .80 |
| Four handkerchiefs | .40 |
| Two sheets mended | .60 |
| Four towels | .60 |
| Light | 2.00 |
| Heat | 2.40 |
| Two aprons | .60 |
| One skirt | .40 |
| Christmas present to janitress..... | 1.00 |
| Total | \$53.80 |

So much for the house expenses. Here is the cost of food and fuel, which amounted to eighteen cents a day!

| | |
|--------------------|---------------|
| Bread | \$0.04 |
| Milk | .02 |
| Meat | .05 |
| Vegetables | .02 |
| Butter | .02 |
| Coal | .03 |
| Total | \$0.18 |

The total expenses amounting only to one hundred and nineteen dollars and thirty cents, and the income reaching to one hundred and twenty dollars, there was, it will be seen, a saving of seventy cents in the year, to be laid aside "in case of emergency"!

We might be inclined to exclaim "Impossible!" were it not that we have a more surprising budget still to wonder at. Another of the *midinettes*, employed in a ready-made clothes establishment, divided as follows the wages of seventy-five dollars which she earned in a year:

| | |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Rent | \$20.00 |
| One dress | 1.00 |
| One shawl | .40 |
| Two stockings | .26 |
| Two pairs shoes | 1.00 |
| Two chemises | .50 |
| One nightgown | .25 |
| Two handkerchiefs | .16 |
| Two towels | .16 |
| Light | .80 |
| Total | \$25.13 |

We note that there was no expense for heating.

The food, bought already cooked or cold, cost as follows:

| | |
|----------------------|--------|
| Breakfast and Lunch: | |
| Milk | \$0.01 |
| Bread | .04 |
| Sausage | .02 |
| Fried potatoes | .01 |
| Cheese | .02 |
| Supper: | |
| Cold meat | .02 |
| Potatoes | .01 |
| <hr/> | |
| Total | \$0.13 |

These cases are not exceptional!

Monsieur Benoist affirms that there are a great number of working-girls in Paris who earn less than fifty cents a day, and who live on this without asking help from any one. To be sure, these are the more unfortunate members, and there are skilful workers in the sewing-room who earn as much as eighty cents a day, but it is the humblest among the humble who are the most interesting.

It will be protested, no doubt, that there is the same difference between wages and expenses in America as in France, and that therefore, the proportions remaining the same, the situation does not alter. This I can with some authority contradict, for the opinion of men like M. Jules Siegfried, who have studied the wage question in both countries, confirms what chanced to be my own personal experience: the laborer in America makes double what he does in France, and spends only a fraction more. In my *débuts* as a factory girl I never was offered less than seventy-five cents a day, or four dollars and a half a week, for unskilled work. I never paid more than three dollars a week for board, lodgings, heat, light, and washing. This left a balance of one dollar and a half a week for clothes, car-fare, "pin-money," and savings, at the very outset, and after a week or ten days' practice I was able to earn regularly six to six and a half dollars a week. The skilled "hands" in the mills where I worked gained on piece-work an average of ten dollars a week.

What, indeed, we must ask ourselves, can be the consolation of a girl of eighteen—perhaps even younger—alone in Paris, starting at a salary of fifty cents a day, with little hope of gaining more? Those whose horizon is hemmed in by the narrow confines of the material world will find no temptation to speculate regarding the inward joys of a poor creature who subsists on thirteen cents a day! Those, on the other hand, who do not live by bread alone, will understand. First of all, there is the moral satisfaction of sufficing honestly to oneself, without making upon others demands which they might find it difficult

to meet, or without taking from any one what might have to be repaid at a cost too dear. Then there is the great consolation—or torment, as the case may be—at all events, the absorbing, masterful, distracting preoccupation: love! Without the wings of Cupid to lift her into the clouds, the little *ouvrière's* burden would crush her too heavily to earth.

The American factory girl names in two different classes the youths who pay her court: there is the "beau," who may be changed at any moment, and there is the "steady," who will not be changed oftener than once a year. But always change there must be! The desire for conquest and the will to resist make the American wild rose no less a coquette than her sister the American beauty.

With the French working-girl it is quite different. The agitation and excitement of courtship are attended in her mind with the hope of marriage. Her modest earnings do not provoke an undue independence. If she does not actually dream of protection, at least her reveries are of sharing with another her effort and her recompense.

Once a year this tacit expectancy which is uppermost in the heart of every *midinette* expresses itself symbolically. At the feast of Saint Catherine, on the twenty-fifth of November, there is a faint odor of orange blossoms wafted upon the misty winter air in the populous quarters of Paris. Not that there are on this day more weddings than on any other. The shipment of fragrant blossoms from Nice is made for the *midinettes* who would be brides before the year is out. Every humble little working-girl in the city, if she has passed the age of twenty-four without marrying, dons a spray of the white flowers on her way to the atelier in the morning, and offers to Saint Catherine a prayer that she will help her find the longed-for husband.

For the deprivation to which she is condemned by the oversupply of hands in any crowded metropolis, the little French seamstress is to be pitied indeed. More than compassion, though—we owe her gratitude for the unselfish and spontaneous nature which at one time made her, as the *grisette*, a romantic and alluring heroine; and again for the gayety and grace which enliven what overwork might so easily have dulled: the gentle nature and the smiling visage of the present *midinette*.



HALF LOVED

BY GRACE SHOUP

I WOULD not choose to be half loved in heaven.
 Happier were darkness, outcast and alone.
 Joy turns to scorn, with pity for a leaven:
 Love unrequited shrivels on its throne.



ISAIAH'S DADDY

BY E LA MIDDLETON TYBOUT

Author of "The Smuggler," "The Wife of the Secretary of State," etc.

ISAIAH was swinging on the back gate. He clung bat-like to the top and bottom bars with one foot and one hand, employing the other foot as a propeller. The gate had been used so often for this purpose that it drooped on its hinges in a depressed and melancholy manner, and had long refused to latch securely.

Inside the kitchen window his mother endeavored to keep one eye on her ironing-board, the other on her offspring.

"I wants tuh go-o-o," he whined, with the rising inflection usual in such cases.

"'Tain' noways fitten fo' yo' tuh go. Dey's gwine tuh be plenty mo' 'scurzions, but yo' daddy's funeril sarmint ain' gwine tuh be preached but de wunst. Yo' jes' p'intedly got tuh hyah it. Yo' an' me's gwine tuh pay ouah 'spec's tuh de daid."

Isaiah scratched his head. The question of parentage is sometimes puzzling, especially when one's mother makes more than one matrimonial venture.

"Whuh meh daddy keep hisse'f?" he inquired. "He don' nevah come tuh we-all's house."

"Yo' daddy," returned his mother, "am daid an' gone at las', praise de Lawd. He sho' wuh de mos' low-down, no-'count niggah in Poke-town, an' yo' am he mo'tal spit-an'-image. Git tuh wuck an' pick up chips, an' don' lemme hyah no mo' 'bout 'scurzions."

Isaiah picked up chips, but his heart rebelled at the irony of fate. Having heretofore heard his progenitor mentioned only as the synonym

for all the vices, it seemed unnecessary to forego a picnic on his account.

The day wore slowly on. As evening approached, Mrs. Bristow arrayed herself in a black dress, and Isaiah observed a black bonnet and veil spread out in state upon her bed. Perhaps the air of subdued excitement that enveloped her was not unnatural, since but few women are accorded the privilege of listening to the sermon depicting the virtues of one husband, while upheld and supported by another and clad in mourning of his providing. This Mrs. Bristow proposed to do, and she fully realized the importance of her position, even insisting that her son should don a clean shirt in honor of the event.

"Yo' an' me," she explained, "am gwine tuh set on de front bench an' be chief mo'nahs."

This was but slight comfort. Isaiah reflected bitterly upon the prominence of the front bench, and the target afforded by its occupants for the ungodly in the back row.

When Mr. Bristow returned that evening he brought with him the pastor of Little Bethel, the Rev. Kinnard Brice, who was to render tribute to the departed. Had one been disposed to be critical, Mr. Bristow's position might have been considered slightly equivocal, since his predecessor certainly occupied the centre of the stage.

Supper was served with reckless prodigality as to butter and white sugar. Isaiah wandered at will among the edibles, and began to think life had its compensations.

"Sistah Bristow," remarked the guest, "huccum yo' done ma'y Brothah Bristow twell yo' got Brothah Johnsing's sarmint preached. Huccum yo' do dat, sistah?"

"I done ma'y Rube," replied the lady candidly, "'caze he had fifty dollahs in de bank an' two fat hawgs in he pen. Dat's huccum I ma'y him, Brothah Brice."

"An' den," interposed Mr. Bristow, "jes' ez soon ez I brung Rachel home, she tuck an' begun tuh hone tuh hyah de funeril sarmint o' dat ornery niggah 'Lige Johnsing, whut lef' huh dis many a yeah ago."

"Of co'se," said Mr. Brice, "Sistah Bristow am a lady o' refinery."

"I done tol' huh," continued Rube, "dat when I's 'swaded dat triflin' niggah daid fo' sho', I'd up an' pay fo' he sarmint, an' not befo'."

"Rube am pow'ful close-fisted," sighed Mrs. Bristow, but Mr. Brice pushed back his chair and raised his hand in expostulation.

"Sof'ly, brothah, sof'ly!" he exclaimed. "Huccum yo' take dis lady tuh yo' buzzom ez yo' wife when she done got a strong right ahm tuh wuck fo' huh. 'Splain yo'se'f, brothah, 'splain yo'se'f."

"Mighty easy 'splained," put in Mrs. Bristow carelessly. "I done ma'y 'Lige befo' de squire. Dat soht o' weddin' las' six yeah, ez yo' knows mighty well. De time am run out long ago."

"Dat's so," agreed Mr. Brice. "Dat's so. I axes yo' pardon, Sistah Bristow, fo' meh aspirations on yo' charactah."

"I grants yo' grace, Brothah Brice. But I thought yo' knowed I was n' no cheap niggah. I's a lady, I is."

"Sho'ly, sistah, sho'ly. But am yo' easy in yo' mine dat 'Lige am sho' 'nuff daid an' gone? Huccum yo' reckon he daid?"

Mrs. Bristow set forth good and sufficient reasons for her belief, and her arguments were admitted as sound.

It was a proud moment for the chief mourner when she adjusted the heavy crape veil over her face and started forth, her sombre garments rustling impressively. This veil had been contributed by a sympathizing neighbor, and was the finishing touch to her costume. It was dejectedly limp and of a rusty hue, but it hung nearly to the bottom of her dress and was therefore eminently satisfactory.

Poketown assembled at doors and windows to see the little procession pass, and hastily made ready to follow them, for, as Aunt Janty Gibbs remarked to Aunt Martha Young:

"Brothah Brice am got on he mos' sanctified 'sprezion an' look like he gwine tuh labah hahd."

When they reached the canal they were obliged to pause, for the drawbridge was off to allow the daily boat from Baltimore to pass into the lock. Isaiah, whose eyes followed it longingly, observed a man and woman on the deck looking with interest at the group about the bridge. His mother did not notice them, for the veil was thick, and she was absorbed in conversation.

"Am yo' gwine tuh do yo' bes' fo' 'Lige, brothah?" she inquired anxiously. "Hit sho' am gwine tuh take yo' help tuh git ol' Petah to open de Gate."

Brother Brice shook his head sorrowfully.

"Ole Petah am got a haht o' stone, same ez he gate-pos', Sistah Bristow. Dunno ez I kin melt it fo' de mattah o' seventy-five cents."

"Dat am de price yo' axed," interrupted Mr. Bristow. "Yo' done say yo' up an' preach de sarmint fo' seventy-five cents."

"Ya-as, Brothah Bristow, but I did n' calc'late tuh git him inside fo' dat price nohow. I kin 'zort a heap mo' fo'ceful fuh two dollah den I kin fo' seventy-five cents. Hit sho' am gwine tuh take de bes' quality o' 'zortin' tuh git 'Lige thu de Gate."

"'Tain' nawthin tuh me ef he don' git thu," said Rube the close-fisted. "I ain' gwine tuh was'e no mo' good money on dat triffin' niggah. Does yo' hyah me talkin'?"

"Some bacon," suggested Mr. Brice delicately, "or one o' dem li'l peegs I seen in yo' pen."

"Rube," entreated Mrs. Bristow, "'membah he am Isaiah's daddy an' th'ow in de one-eyed shoat."

Reuben considered, and Mr. Brice closed one eye and smacked his lips unctuously.

"Fo' seventy-five cents an' de one-eyed shoat," he remarked, "I seals mehse'f tuh lay de case befo' de Lawd an' bring 'Lige shoutin' intuh glory safe an' soun'."

"Take it," retorted Reuben; "take it. But ef de Lawd done 'low hisse'f tuh be 'swaded by a hawg I's s'prised, dat's whut I is—s'prised."

This remark admitted of two interpretations, and Mr. Brice was still pondering upon it when they reached the church.

The seating capacity of Little Bethel was taxed to the utmost. As the Shepherd scrutinized his flock he even detected many members of Zion, the rival church, and the thought that his prospective eloquence had lured them hither was pleasant indeed.

Close at hand were gathered the faithful, who might be relied upon to insert appropriate ejaculations and to start hymns at proper intervals. On the front bench sat the two chief mourners, with Reuben a little withdrawn from them, and collected *en masse* a little in the rear the members of the Johnson family were gathered to show their respect to the deceased.

Brother Brice felt that his reputation was at stake; he also remembered his long arrears of salary, and cast a speculative eye among the crowded benches as he arose to open the services.

"We will all jine in de hymn on the fo'th page," he announced, "an' while we am a-singin' Brothah Staffo'd will pass roun' de hat."

The hymn was sung and the hat passed. Mr. Brice again stepped to the front of the pulpit.

"I rises tuh redress yo', meh frien's," he began, "on a mighty sad subjec'. Yo' 'membahs 'Lijah Johnsing, wunst de waywahd husban' o' Sistah Rachel Bristow? He am now daid an' gone, an' he relic' done ax me make he peace wid de Lawd."

"A-amen!" ejaculated the relict.

"Mos'ly," continued Mr. Brice, "on sich 'casions I has de co'pse befo' me. De body am hyah an' de soul am wid de Lawd. I ain' noways sho' whuh Mistah Johnsing's body am tuh-day, nuh who he soul am wid, but I hopes fo' de bes'—ya-a-as, I hopes fo' de bes'."

"I did not love de fol',
I wus a wanderin' sheep,"

sang Aunt Janty Gibbs in her high soprano, and the congregation joined in with gusto.

"Po' strayin' sheep," commented the pastor, "he done wandah away f'om Poketown intuh de highways o' sin. I's gwine tuh wras'le hahd wid de Lawd fo' de co'pse, but yo'-all knowed he lived lightsome. He

play de fiddle, he walk on he tiptoes wid de gals, an' he look on de wine when it am raid. Now he am daid."

"Glory Hallelujah!" shouted Isaiah suddenly.

"Shet yo' mouf," whispered his mother. "'Tain' time tuh glorify yit."

"Ya-as," resumed Mr. Brice; "de pusson called 'Lijah Johnsing am a-knockin' at de Gate. Whut do he say? He say: 'Lemme in, Mistah Petah.' Mistah Petah say: 'Who dat knockin'?' He done make ansuh: 'Hit am 'Lijah Johnsing, suh.' Den Mistah Petah put up de chain bolt and open de Gate mighty cautious-like. 'G'way, niggah,' he say. 'Whut yo' evah done tuh git in hyah?' 'Lige he see de Golden Street thu de crack, but ovah he shouldah he see ole Satan wid he bellus blowing up de fiah, mighty close-like."

At this point 'Lige's relict groaned heavily beneath her veil, and a gusty sigh swept through the congregation.

"De Gate am big," continued the preacher, "de Gate am strong. 'Lige he done set he foot ag'inst it an' pushes hahd, 'caze he hyah de fiah a-sizzlin', ya-as, he pushes hahd. 'Am yo' sanctified?' sez Mistah Petah. 'Tell me dat.'"

"He'p him, good Lawd!" shouted Uncle William Stafford. "He'p him!"

"De Gate am big, de Gate am strong. 'Lige he fling hisse'f ag'inst it an' de chain bolt creak. 'Quit yo' scrougin', sez Mistah Petah. 'No cheap niggahs heah.' 'Lige he feel he back gittin' pow'ful hot. He fling hisse'f wunst mo' ag'inst de Gate an' pushes hahd. Ya-as, oh, ya-as, he pushes hahd."

"Keep a-pushin', 'Lige, keep a-pushin'!" shouted Samuel Johnson, a brother of the deceased.

"Open de do', open de do'.
De way am so easy tuh sin;
Open de do', waitin' no mo',
An' let de po' sannah come in."

sang Aunt Janty Gibbs, swaying to and fro.

Excitement was now at white heat. Some groaned, some clapped their hands and shouted, and all joined in the refrain until the walls of Little Bethel trembled with the volume of sound.

Isaiah sang also. Why, he did not know, but his small body swayed in unison with his mother's mountainous bulk, and his pulses tingled strangely.

The last notes died away, and an intense stillness prevailed. The preacher dropped his voice to a sepulchral whisper, and Isaiah clutched his mother's skirt apprehensively.

"'Lige he rattle at de Gate. Ole Satan he lay low an' wuck he

bellus—oh, he wuck he bellus! De fiah bu'n bright, de coals am raid. 'Lige he feel he haiah begin tuh singe. 'Lemme in, Mistah Petah, lemme in!' he sez. He haiah do singe, ya-as—oh, Lawd! he back do sco'ch!"

Mrs. Bristow rose with a scream of terror. "Pray fo' 'Lige, brothah," she gasped. "Pray fo' 'Lige."

Brother Brice extended his hand, and the congregation, with one exception, fell upon their knees. The exception was a stranger who sat rigidly upright on the back bench, behind a post, and now and then touched himself uncertainly as the prayer proceeded.

"Lawd Gawd A'mighty, won' you please tuh git down offen yo' big W'ite Th'one an' let dis po' sannah in? Ain' yo' got no co'nah he kin slip intuh unbeknownst tuh de angils? He ain' wu'thy, we all knows dat, but, O good Lawd, 'tain' alwiz dem whut is mos' wu'thy whut sets de highes' an' sings de loudes'."

"Amen!" interrupted Aunt Martha Young. "Amen!"

"'Tain' fo' he own sake we axes dis hyah favah, good Lawd. We axes it speshul 'caze o' he lady wife an' he li'l chil'."

Mrs. Bristow here began to clap her hands and sway violently from side to side.

"He gwine tuh git in!" she shouted. "De Gate do move. Keep a-prayin', brothah, keep a-prayin'."

Thus encouraged, Brother Brice mopped his brow and continued:

"We don' 'spec' yo' tuh give him a harp o' gol', Lawd. We don' 'spec' him tuh jine in de songs o' de Cherrym an' de Serryphim. We knows he won' git no wings, O Lawd, but we axes yo' tuh leave him crawl undah de Gate an' make hisse'f useful. Mebbe he kin sweep de Golden Street. Mebbe he kin polish up de crowns we-all's gwine tuh weah bimeby. Mebbe he kin——"

"Quit it. Does yo' hyah me talkin'? Drap dem wo'ds."

The interruption came from the rear. Little Bethel turned curiously on its knees and saw a stout, middle-aged man wearing a plaid waistcoat making his way rapidly toward the preacher, who awaited him with drooping jaw, his extended hand trembling visibly.

"De ghos' o' 'Lijah Johnsing!" he articulated. "De ghos' o' 'Lijah Johnsing!"

Little Bethel looked again, hid its face, and shuddered. Mrs. Bristow looked also, and covered her eyes with her hands.

"He ghos' do walk," she moaned. "He ain' nevah gwine tuh git intuh de Kingdom. He ghos' do walk."

"Now, den," remarked the ghost, with the swaggering manner noticeable upon some mortals, "whut yo' mean by dem wo'ds? Whut yo' mean, anyhow, by gittin' me intuh Glory by the back way? When I takes a job polishin' crowns dey ain' gwine tuh res' on yo' haid, Kin-

nard Brice, an' me an' de Lawd kin settle 'bout wings an' sich 'thout no for'n interfloence. Does yo' hyah me talkin'?"

"Sof'ly, brothah, sof'ly," stammered Mr. Brice. "'Membah yo' am daid an' gone."

"Who daid? Me? Does I look daid? Tell me dat!"

He did not. In fact, he looked aggressively alive, and Mr. Brice instinctively retreated a few steps.

"Me daid?" Lige continued. "Me? Come hyah, Vi'let, come hyah!"

With much rustling of skirts a gaudily attired yellow girl, bearing the unmistakable stamp of the city, advanced, simpering excessively.

"Me an' dis hyah lady," announced Mr. Johnson, "done got ma'ied las' night. Do she look like she up an' ma'y a daid man?"

"Hit ain' no ghos'!" exclaimed Mrs. Bristow, tearing off her veil. "Dat am 'Lige hisse'f."

"I done ma'y dis lady an' brung huh tuh see meh folks. We come home tuh-night by de Baltimo' boat. Ez we wuz gwine intuh de lock I see ole Kinnard Brice on de bridge, an' ev'ybody makin' fo' de chu'ch, so I knowed he up tuh somethin'. I come tuh Little Bethel, an' whut does I hyah? He done stan' up in he pulpit an' scarify me wid he mouf, dat's whut he done."

Reuben, who had hitherto remained in the background, now arose and addressed the preacher, with a contemptuous glance at his predecessor.

"Ez de co'pse am hyah in pusson," he remarked, "de bahgain am off. I ain' gwine tuh pay fo' no funeril sarmint twell de subjec' am sho' nuff daid. De one-eyed shoat stay in my pen, an'——"

He paused, for Isaiah emitted an ear-splitting yell and cast himself upon the floor.

"He ain' dead!" he howled. "Meh daddy ain' daid! I kain' go tuh no 'scurzions twell I hyahs he funeril sarmint."

Brother Brice had been thinking. He heard a buzz of conversation from his congregation, interspersed with an occasional scornful laugh from the members of Zion, who had withdrawn into a disdainful group, and thought bitterly that Little Bethel would be the laughing-stock of Poketown. He also thought of his lost remuneration, and cast a revengeful glance at the source of the trouble, as he called loudly for order.

"Take away de chil'," he commanded, as the wails of Isaiah rent the air.

"'Tain' fitten fo' he young min' tuh hyah de wo'ds hit am meh juty tuh say," he continued, as Isaiah was borne out, limp and protesting. "Will Brothah William Staffo'd, Brothah Abram Finney, an' all membahs o' de session take dey places in de front row?"

The wondering congregation subsided as the pillars of the church arranged themselves upon the front bench.

"De subjec' befo' de session," began Mr. Brice, "am whuthuh dis pusson called 'Lijah Johnsing had de right tuh up an' ma'y de yallah lady f'om de city, when Sistah Rachel Johnsing—a lady o' quality—wuz a-livin' in Poketown. Whut yo' got tuh say, Brothah Hyatt?"

"Sistah Rachel done jine huhse'f tuh Brothah Bristow dis two yeah ago," returned Brother Hyatt, "an' she done puffec'ly right. De time done run out fuh 'Lijah Johnsing."

"Dat am de p'int, brothah, dat am de p'int. Sistah Rachel am a real lady. She ma'y 'Lige befo' de squire, an' she done stick by him 'co'din' tuh huh promise. Whut do 'Lijah Johnsing do? Tell me dat. He up an' hunch hisse'f away when de spirit move him, long befo' he time am up wid Sistah Rachel Johnsing."

"Dat whut he done," agreed Brother William Stafford.

"Ez I 'membahs de law," continued the preacher, "dey's got tuh bide by de contrac' twell de time am up or dey loses de right tuh change. Is I right, Brothah Finney?"

Brother Finney smiled a crooked little smile as he looked at Elijah Johnson and replied:

"De sanctified o' de Lawd am alwiz right, brothah."

"W-whut yo' talkin' 'bout?" stammered Mr. Johnson, and the yellow girl clutched him apprehensively.

"Bein' de favahed o' de Lawd," resumed Mr. Brice, "I done takes it on mehse'f tuh ack fo' Him in dis mattah. He done projec' de Sperit o' de Sanctified intuh me fo' dis purpose. In de presunce o' yo'-all I hyahby renounces 'Lijah Johnsing divo'ced f'om de yallah lady, an' han's him ovah tuh Sistah Rachel Johnsing fo' good an' all. Dem whut am jus'ly put in sundah let nobody jine together."

"Amen!" finished the session, and Brother Hyatt turned to the trembling Baltimore belle.

"Step back, gal," he said sternly. "Dat am de propetty o' somebody else. Keep yo' han's f'om pickin' an' stealin'."

"Whut yo' gwine tuh do wid him, Sistah Bristow?" inquired Brother William Stafford, with interest.

"Ya-as, whut yo' gwine tuh do wid him, Rachel?" said Rube. "Dey sho' ain' gwine tuh be room fo' no trash in my house."

"Is you' gwine tuh leave me, 'Lijah Johnsing?" demanded the yellow girl, flinging herself into his arms. "I loves yo', honey, I loves yo'!"

"Of co'se," remarked Mr. Brice casually, "ef Mistah Johnsing done s'lect tuh stay daid dem wo'ds don' count, 'caze dey kain' nobody divo'ce a co'pse."

"Stay daid, 'Lige, stay daid," moaned the girl.

"Reckon yo' mought ez well stay daid," remarked Reuben. "Yo' an' me 's gwine tuh settle de mattah o' Rachel in ouah back yahd ef yo' lives. I 's got a gredge ag'inst yo', I has."

"Me, too," added Brother Abram Finney. "'Membah de yallah mule yo' done sol' me?"

"Huccum yo' up an' tuck dem two dollahs f'om outen meh plaid pants?" suddenly inquired Samuel Johnson, metamorphosed from a sorrowing brother into an indignant creditor.

"Be daid, 'Lige, be daid," urged the bride. "Whut diff'unce do it make in Baltimo' whuthuh yo's daid in Poketown?"

Thus over-persuaded, and not a little apprehensive of the unexpected turn affairs were taking, and the rapidly increasing accounts presenting themselves to him for settlement, Mr. Johnson conferred earnestly apart with the preacher, and accompanied his remarks with a silent transfer of funds. At last he stood before the pulpit, nervously twirling his gilt watch-chain, while Brother Brice again addressed his flock.

"Dis hyah gen'leman," he announced, "'zires me tuh say dat a mistake done been made. Dis hyah gen'leman nevah seen Sistah Rachel Bristow. He hyah de name o' Johnsing an' done tuck it on hisse'f tuh ansuh—dat bein' he name ez fah ez he know. He suttinly do favah de 'Lijah Johnsing whose loss we-all mou'n dis night, but he ain' de same pusson, an' 'tain' right fuh him tuh take 'Lige's sins on hisse'f. 'Lijah Johnsing am daid an' gone, an' he funeril sarmint preached dis night—'co'din' tuh contrac'. Le's jine in singin' de hymn on de fus' page—an' may de sperit o' Mistah Johnsing res' in peace."

As the hymn was being sung Mrs. Bristow felt her skirt twitched gently. She looked around to find Mr. Johnson and his bride at her elbow, and her nose immediately elevated itself as high as possible.

"Does yo' feel bad 'bout not gittin' him?" inquired the girl. "I's mighty sorry fo' yo', dat's whut I is. Reckon yo' wan's him pow'ful bad, same ez me."

Rachel caught a glimpse of the erring 'Lige smiling at his bride, and indignation swelled within her. She waited until the hymn was finished, then walked over to Reuben and ostentatiously put her hand through his arm.

"I reckon yo' done feel mighty bad 'bout it," murmured the girl.

"Who feel bad?" returned Mrs. Bristow, so that all might hear.

"Me feel bad? Laws, honey, dat niggah nevah wuz nawthin' tuh me nohow. He Isaiah's daddy—dat's all."



AT THE DOOR OF THE CAGE

By Adèle Marie Shaw

“I SHALL be so happy to be useful to you, my dear.” The words were unctuously affectionate.

“That is ever so nice of you, but my trousseau will be very simple.”

The Hardings were being kind to their brother's fiancée. Mrs. Deaver, the eldest Harding sister, was making much of a magnificent acceptance of the situation.

“If Brother Arnold *will* marry his stenographer,” she had announced after the first shock, to the more timid Henrietta and the openly hostile Ella, “he will. And people might as well say, ‘The family are lovely to her,’ as to gossip about our taking it hard because we wanted Arnold's money for our children.”

“I do wish, Charlotte, it could have been the ‘honorable,’” plaintively interjected Henrietta, who as Mrs. Van Vecht was obviously entitled to speak before the unmarried Ella. “An Englishwoman is so nice to know, and they make such serviceable wives. I always thought she liked——”

“Arnold would never do anything as he ought. You can say what you please, Charlotte, but Brother Arnold has an eccentric streak.” If Miss Ella Harding had said a yellow streak or a homicidal streak, the words could have contained no more grief of confession.

“I know, Ella, I know,” put in Charlotte impatiently; “but it's of no use to think of that now. The thing is settled. It's for us to——”

“That was why,” went on Miss Ella Harding doggedly, “I wanted Arnold on the Tenement Committee. Miss White was on that committee, and there's nothing like working together——”

“Exactly,” interrupted Charlotte dryly. “He has worked with his stenographer. I have left cards. Now we will invite her to dinner.”

The dinner was impressive. The young woman must at least be made to realize what she was getting, to what traditions she must rise. Nor was she spared the “honorable,” delicately but firmly introduced in the guise of pleasantry by Mrs. Henrietta Van Vecht.

It was after the services in the dining-room had been conducted to a leisurely close that Mrs. Deaver, laying a heavy arm about the girl's waist, convoyed her to the library, away from the well-meant amiability of Mr. Deaver and Mr. Van Vecht, and showed to her the family portraits.

There it was that she had offered her aid in the shopping and dress-making that precede matrimony, and it was there, with five generations of Hardings above her head, that the girl had refused the offer, pleading in great good faith that her trousseau would be "simple."

It was evident that the painstaking kindness of Mrs. Deaver was troubled by the word. "Simplicity is expensive," she said quickly. "I might save you——"

"Thank you," said Fordyce with soft decision, slipping from the clamping arm, on the excuse of a nearer view of Theophilus Bradley Harding. "Thank you. What fine eyes he had!"

"I can take you to my dressmaker. She is good, and she is not extravagant," persisted the Harding autocrat.

"Thank you," said Fordyce again, "but clothes are a little like toilet soaps."

"Toilet soaps?"

"Such an affair of individual taste, you know. Every one has to work out her own salvation, no matter who is willing to help."

Certainly the girl had worked hers out excellently well on this particular evening. And the dress was not new, not made for the dinner. Miss Wright, then, had "dined" before! The sister of Arnold Harding resented this, as she resented the girl's unconscious self-possession in the face of the portraits of the Hardings. Something in Miss Wright's manner, girlishly embarrassed and too warm for convention, had vanished during the dinner in as much self-command as even a Harding could desire.

Fordyce was eating the fruit of disillusion. It was nauseous; and it had produced the smiling but final retort about the clothes. The kindness of the sisters, especially the cloying amiability of the two married ones, had startled her; they would never have treated so a girl of their own world. And this last insufferable implication about clothes! What affair of theirs was the trousseau of the woman their brother married?

The futile, well-fed commonplace of the clan would have escaped her judgment if there had been no patronage to set smarting her pride. Now she said to herself that these people were stupid, and they were patronizing her, *her*, a Wright of Old Hallam, a girl whose family went back to the Sieur Bartelot of the Norman Conquest, and told its later generations in names useful to their time. Till this evening she had been naively sure that others would think it was Arnold, not her-

self, who received the overfull measure. She had dreamed the sisters reassuring her for her acceptance of a man older than herself, she had imagined them telling her how much nobler Arnold was than younger men! And she had had ready her reply. It had been a loyal reply. The first shrinking of twenty-four in the contemplation of another decade was over; she had forgiven with the arrogance of her youngness Arnold's handicap of age.

In her unsophistication that was still more youthful than her years it had not seriously occurred to her that her independence was a thing likely to be obnoxious to others. She had left college aware that her little inherited nugget had been half-melted in the process of her education. She had felt no "call" to teach, but she had had the business sense, the accuracy, the concentration, of a great uncle who had made the only fortune the family had owned since the days of the Norman noble. It was not favoritism, but "good value rendered," that had promoted her to her place as confidential secretary in the Arnold Harding offices. Youth, education, success! These Fordyce had supposed would more than offset any meretricious advantage of money. She had reckoned, too, though unconsciously, upon a personality that had attracted more than a little homage. The oversweetness of her reception insulted her self-respect; here was not even equality.

Arnold Harding was effacing himself that his sisters might have a chance to see for themselves what a treasure among women he had secured. Beheld in this suffocating domesticity and at the distance he carefully left open, he was a different man, Fordyce thought miserably, from the man she had loved, the man in whom business had not killed poetry. In his home he seemed the tamely acquiescent victim of an inherited stuffiness. The years to be spent in stolid worship of the Harding gods leered at her out of the future in a succession of grotesque miseries. It was all orderly, well-bred—too well-bred, too noiseless. Could she let any man lock her into this smother of social and domestic cushions? What echo of the real world could ever get beyond them?

Arnold's look as he tucked her into the carriage gave her a stab of repentance, but woke no answering glance. Whose word would have weight with him, the word of his sisters, who evidently had always ruled him, or the word of his wife, whose inexperience and insignificance they thought they could patronize?

The clean, shining entrance of the Venetia, with its rugs, its eternal potted palms, its sleepy elevator boy with his respectful, "Evenin', Miss Wright," filled her with a sense of rescue. Gertrude Weston, her chum and the sharer of five sunny rooms and a civilized bath, had not come in; she had taken "friends from home" to the theatre. Into a big chair, among her own books, her own pictures, her own

blessed belongings, Fordyce dropped. "My own place, where no one can give advice, where my own friends can come, not another's, where I can shut out the whole earth, even Gertrude! How could I give it up!" Her look said this as she waited, conscious of battle to come.

Her sense of lost freedom, the fear that overtakes well-nigh every woman who has exchanged a myriad happy possibilities for one certainty, the terror of the cage when escape seems impossible—all this overtook Fordyce Wright. She had not thought doubt could intrude in a real engagement. Had she been mistaken? Honor! That would forbid her breaking her engagement. Would it demand that she lie to Arnold now that she did not love him well enough to marry him and live his life? Had it been, after all, the prestige of his position among men that had deceived her?

Her eyes fell upon a folded paper scrawled with her name. It was Lewis Mervine's hand, the hand of that foolish youth whom she had sent away because she could not stand his making love to her. Before that he had been a fascinating friend to have, so young—she shifted her thoughts hastily from the *young*; it seemed disloyal—so near that Bohemia of which she dreamed, that land of poverty and struggle where effort wore always the glamour of romance, and the courage of the struggler was concealed beneath a debonair indifference! If Fordyce Wright had a sentimentality, it was about this Bohemia that her independent existence was too well-fed and too little ambitious to touch. In Bohemia every one became great or died trying! This handsome boy, so quick to feel a pleasure or a rebuff, had talked eloquently about ideals, the ideals of her dream Bohemia. Since his dismissal she had more than once missed him. She opened the unsealed sheet.

"They tell me you are not here," the note began, "so I must wait to know if it be true. It *cannot* be. What to *you* is mere ease of living? You with your glow, *your glory of youth and fire and genius*, to marry a rich man!"

The letter was done in an agitated hand, underscored like a hysterical woman's. To Fordyce, reading with the grieved memory of the hurt she had inflicted, its words distorted themselves to sincerity and unselfishness. That made forgivable their intrusion, and of course he did not know Arnold. No one who knew Arnold Harding would call him merely a "rich man." Oh, if she could see Arnold and tell him—tell him that she could not keep her promise without falsehood, and ask him to let her go!

And she had treated Mervine cruelly! She had been too selfishly troubled by the fevered unpleasantness of an undesired love. She must make it right with both men. Poverty and hardship had never been the things she feared, and it was not for "ease of living" that

she was going to marry Arnold Harding. Only now she was not going to marry him. Why had she felt no revulsion toward Arnold's love-making, since so soon she wanted to escape from him? And why had she been so shallow as to turn her back on Mervine when if she had been firm and patient he would have stopped making love, and by her encouragement been helped to do great things! She had been selfish in everything. It was contemptible. She felt like a criminal for whom there is possible no complete expiation.

Deep in a slough of distrust, she tried to construct a letter to Arnold. Milk-carts were reverberating in the empty street of a Sunday morning when she went to bed.

Breakfast time brought flowers and a note. Arnold would be out of town all day. His sisters wanted him to go out to West Chester and announce to an aged aunt his coming marriage. His obedience stung her. Unconsciously, she had hoped some miracle from his presence, that the day would bring them an opportunity to meet. His note decided her; she put a special delivery stamp upon her letter to him and mailed it.

The afternoon was all rain and mire in the streets, and the drench of the clouds was beaten dismally upon her panes. Through the dinner in the Venetia dining-room she suffered, outwardly polite, helping Gertrude Weston entertain the "friends from home." Afterward she attempted to write Mervine, but whatever she said became too significant the instant it was on paper. Finally she remembered that she no longer knew where he lived.

She could not sit and brood over her troubles forever. It was more than she could endure with a passive body. She would walk.

"'S rainin' hard, Miss Wright," volunteered Jim, the elevator boy.

It certainly was raining hard—and blowing worse. But another night of mental misery seemed to Fordyce, used to her unbroken sleep, too much torment to contemplate. If she could get very tired, perhaps things would let her alone till morning. As she plunged along a dour pleasure filled her at the thought of what the masterful Mrs. Deaver and the timid Henrietta would say if they could see her in the dusk of this Sunday night battling her way alone through the city streets. What would they soon be saying, and justly saying, of the girl who had taken their brother's love and then thrown it away like a capricious baby? And yet could any woman put herself where a run in the dusk in the face of a gale would be a thing more difficult to attain than a crime?

The selfish side of the struggle would not stay uppermost; more and more the thought of the man she was going to disappoint—she with his quiet figure came back to her the boy's beauty of the lad she would use no harsher word—penetrated her doubts. And contrasted

had hurt, its brightness marred by the sorrow that she had brought him. Involved in a worse turmoil within than the scouring and lashing of the storm about her, she paid less and less heed to her steps and plunged farther and farther into that limbo of the town where business encroaches upon living and living is carried on in the midst of business. She was near Marian Wilder's boarding-house; in Marian's presence questions of right and wrong often seemed simpler of solution. Fordyce peered from under her umbrella for the numbers above the dim doorways. There it was, Marian's number, and Marian's light was in the third floor front. Fordyce crossed the street.

"Come in. It's a joy to look at you, you nice child." Marian Wilder drew the girl from the deserted halls into the refuge of her own room. "Just stay on the rug till I get you undone. Ugh! You clammy creature! Tea or coffee, Fordyce? Say which. I'm going to move." Marian hung her rubbers on the waste basket pushed against the register. "They're wet as sop?" she parenthesized. "Yes, my dear, I'm going to get out of this neighborhood at last. I've stayed with my landlady because she was good to me when she was prosperous and I was not, but there's a limit. There are people with whom a self-respecting human can't eat his meat—even cold-storage meat!"

"What has become of Lewis Mervine?" asked Fordyce, watching the kettle. "Once he boarded here, did n't he?" She had hoped Marian would know the address. Then one could send for him and make right the harm one had done.

"He's back, I'm sorry to say." Marian pulled a chair nearer to the register; the room was cold.

"Sorry?"

"Yes." Marian leaned forward, explaining in an undertone.

"That is n't true at all." Fordyce was indignant. "He was working." She could not tell Marian that Mervine had left his accustomed haunts in November to heal his wound in solitude, but she knew; she knew because he had told her what he meant to do. "I don't see, Marian, how you can listen to such stories!"

"I don't," said Marian placidly. "And I have never mentioned it before. But it's true. It is a misfortune that the thing came to me, but it did, and it's no 'hearsay,' and now I can't sit at the table and hear that man talk about art—and ideals!" Marian paused and devoted herself to the tea.

Fordyce had grown white. Sudden physical nausea kept her silent.

"Was he—good—till last November?" she asked at length.

"Oh, dear, no! It's been the same before. Two years ago—Let's talk of 'ships and sealing wax.' I have to wash my mind out every time I think of him."

Fordyce sipped her tea, and the color came back to her cheeks.

When she rose to go she had discounted Marian's story. It was perhaps the effect of living in a boarding-house. She had never before known Marian to gossip.

She was at the foot of the first stairway of her descent when the door that confronted its last turn sucked open in some draught from below. Fordyce halted one bare second, her body numb with the blow of surprise, and then with a frantic motion—a single motion, it seemed to her in her headlong flight—she was out in the cool night, the clean rain on her cheeks.

Yet it had been no basilisk that had faced her; nothing more than an untidy room, two men, and a rumple-haired servant maid feigning a struggle in the arms of one of the men. All three had been laughing, and the man who had clutched the girl had been Lewis Mervine.

At first the rage of an overwhelming disgust swept Fordyce on her way. Then rage slipped from her, left behind like the blind impulse of her young emotions. Her pace steadied. Her steps fell to the quiet assurance of one who has stumbled from vague shadows into the light of day.

Gertrude Weston heard the key in the lock, and came forth into their private corridor, easefully arrayed in a flowing kimono. Fordyce shut the door behind her.

"They're gone," announced Gertrude, in a voice that asked a deserved approbation. "The Fosters are gone. If Jim brings up any cards, tell him that I'm ill or insane. We've been to *three* churches to-day. And I've seen Grant's Tomb and Bedloe's Island for the last time—mark me well, Horatio!" Miss Weston retreated into her own end of the apartment and prepared to close the doors. "Good night," she called as the last catch slipped. "You'll find a trifling tribute of candied fruit on your table."

Fordyce was glad of Gertrude's closed doors. She pulled mechanically at the fastenings of her rain coat, and hunted for the pins in her hat. While her friend had been talking she had been thinking of Arnold Harding on a business day when she had seen him tried in a fashion that reduces most men to the level of their predatory fellows. That a man who was great enough to resist such trying had given his love to her was comfort to a now doubly wounded pride.

"He says can-you-see-him-a-moment-on-somethin'-important-t won't-take-long." It was Jim the elevator boy delivering his version of a message.

"Tell him to come up." Fordyce held the card and went on hunting for the pins. She had found them and had the hat in her hand when Arnold stood at the threshold. She had made no attempt to smooth her wind-blown hair.

"I got your note. I felt I must see you—this evening," he said.

His face looked hard and cold. She had expected some evidence of grief, but it seemed he was only angry.

In the "living room," her desk and books walling him in, he grew colder, harder. The colored panes of her lamp-shade gave the place the dim mellowness she loved when she was alone with a book; now she turned on the electric lights and stood full in their glare.

How fine he was, this man she had told herself she did not love! How clean and firm the lines of his face, how unspoiled, in spite of his money, by self-indulgence! No wonder he was hard. She was glad. If it were only his pride that was hurt, what did it matter?

"You meant that note? It was not a sudden impulse?" His voice was monotonously accusing in its gravity.

She bowed her head. If only he would go and leave her alone! The light caught in the drops that still clung to her hair. Her cheeks were still warm with the wind. Arnold Harding did not go. He did not take his gaze from her face. His eyes were not cold. They denied the monotony of his speech.

"I won't try after this to influence you. I fear—it is quite possible you have compared me with others."

At his words the color rushed in an inundation over the girl's face. A jealous flame burned in his.

"I want to be sure that you know—what I had thought I had a lifetime to tell you—that I love you as few——" He halted, recognizing the banality of the phrase. "I should like you to know that for many months I have lived every day in the joy of a new discovery—of you; of your purity of purpose, your unselfishness, your quick mind, your—ways; your perfect honesty. I have worshipped like the Eastern men who see the sun rise every day—with a fresh offering to ease the worship they feel." There was no longer monotony in his utterance. "You are so warm and human and vital—so wonderful! Other men have said these things, I know; but they could n't have felt them so much, for they had n't you to inspire their thought." He spoke with the simple emphasis of one who believes what he says. "I don't understand your letter altogether, but I can guess. I seem to you old, my ways too settled. You shrink from me. As a lover, I am repulsive."

Fordyce looked at him, and the color rose again in strength in her face. Her eyes rested on him with concentrated intentness. How glad she would be at that instant—now she knew it—to have him love her! And she had thrown the love away. No man would love her after he knew how childish she had been. Again she was stumbling in the dark, her foolishness looming vague and awful between her and the light.

He took the color for acknowledgment and went determinedly on, after a pause. "You see, I cannot realize that to you I must appear

older than most lovers. I feel so young. I have never had all the youth I wanted. My father died when I—at a time when most young fellows are not having much responsibility. I was just out of college, and my sisters, who had brought me up, had no one else, no one to depend on. The business was in a bad way. For everybody's sake, those years meant close work. Charlotte realized it. She has always been trying to make it up to me, trying to plan a more agreeable life for me—and I have been a trial, from first to last an anxiety, to them all. It is because I have had to balk their plans and disappoint them that I've tried to——” He stopped. His voice, changed, charged with the force of an unrestrainable betrayal, moved upon Fordyce's mood like light upon the waters. “I did not come for your pity,” he began again. “I wanted you to know what I have never really or wholly said. I can't say it now. The habit of silence is too old—like me.” He went quickly on as if he deprecated the bitterness of the last words. “It was right. You did the right thing, the brave thing.”

“No, no, it was not brave,” Fordyce interrupted him, and her words came fast, her heart beating in a child's terror of confession.

She spared him no syllable. The whole story, from the dinner to the flight from Marian's house, in low words she poured upon him. Even the note from Mervine she repeated, and the last, least thought of her fears for lost freedom, the fact that this man on whom she had dwelt too pityingly, to whom she would have sent a message, was common, was “fast.”

As she talked she told herself that one thing she could do to keep Arnold's respect: she could conceal the new longing for his love, the longing that had returned to her all at once, transformed and terrible, like a gift out of Heaven. He would think it mere shallow emotion, another evidence of the weakness of the girl he had so beautifully idealized.

“Poor child.” He was talking, answering her. “Did you think we should have to live that life? If you had loved me”—he had moved eagerly and come nearer, and she looked up at him; in her face he saw only distress, and his eagerness fell away—“if you could have loved me—I think I felt you were my emancipation—that I could go away from—could go away with you. I thought if we loved each other, it would not matter if we made our own place instead of settling down there. We could leave Ella ruling in the old home. It sounds like a selfish dream, but I was thinking of you as well as myself. You do believe that?”

“Yes, yes,” she said; “I believe.”

He was looking hungrily from her to the books, the pictures, the trifles that made a shell for her. “I have dreamed so often of some-

thing like this," he went on. "The freedom, and only the things about that one likes. How tired you are!"

The tenderness in his voice struck the spot where her command was weakest. She threw back her head with a gesture of denial, but the tears overflowed her lashes and fell.

"You are too good to me," she tried to say. "I wish——"

"Don't wish—if it distresses you. Don't be unhappy. We must make the best of it." His look stayed on her, anxiously.

"I don't want to make the best of it!" cried Fordyce. "I want you;" and turned away and sobbed into the crumpled handkerchief she held.

For one breath-forsaken instant shame covered her, then she was taken up into the whirlwind and the fire, and was still more breathless.

"You careless child, you have n't taken off your rubbers," said the man, as, mindful of the elevator boy and of the clock, he struggled, against odds, to go.

"That's what I'm to do always—be careless if I like, and wear rubbers or not wear them, as I please." She rested her hand on his shoulder as he stooped, and laughed at him through wet lashes as he faced her again. "Freedom and love—can we have them both, Arnold?"

"We can, even if I have to be the merest——"

"You could n't be a 'merest.' I shall have to fight to keep your freedom too. We'll have to guard each other's. That's what it comes to, I suppose."

"We're all slaves, and I don't want to go, but I must," he grumbled radiantly. "Do I seem to you so very old?"

"Old?" Fordyce Wright looked at him solemnly. To her eyes he was dowered with such youth and beauty as the gods love. "'Old'—you! You boy!"



COUNTERFEIT PROVERBS

Reduced circumstances alter cases.

"Money enough" is the root of much honesty.

A soapy voice does not always bespeak a clean mind.

A pleasant word in the mouth is worth two in the mind.

Take things as they come or you'll have to catch them as they go.

Warwick James Price

ANGEL PARADISE

By George Edwin Hunt

LONESOME LINTHICUM and I sat in comfortable leather chairs before the open fireplace in the club rotunda. The talk had been of Paradise—Paradise, Arizona, where Lonesome had spent some years as cow-puncher and miner before he made his stake. In his hand was a letter from Big Bill Jernigan, an old comrade of those days, now known as the Honorable William Jernigan, Member of Congress from the sovereign state of Montana. Lonesome was reminiscent, and when Lonesome is reminiscent it behooves his friends to keep silence and give heed. I knew my cue, and this story was my reward.

The Honorable William Jernigan! Think of it! Old long-legged Big Bill Jernigan! Well, there's heaps worse at Washington. Did I ever tell you about the time Bill and I made faces at each other? No? It happened at Paradise. You remember what Saturday was at Paradise. Town full of punchers and miners, the punchers and miners full of liquor and devilment, and the bartenders full of business. Bill and I had been up all night, bucking Three Fingered Pete's faro game, and were far from well. Bill made the bets, and I played look-out for us. Things broke bad, and along about ten o'clock in the morning we quit and were standing at the bar. Bill had a grouch on more than a foot thick, and at that I think mine had his beat a block. So it was just perfectly natural that nothing either of us said would suit the other. I expressed a desire for corned-beef hash and red pepper for breakfast, and what Bill said about my gastronomic ideas was scandalous. Then Bill said he saw a fellow in a stock company in Denver the winter before that was a better actor than Edwin Booth. I never knew Edwin Booth, but I resented Bill's slur on his memory most deeply. Finally Bill said he could rope, throw, and tie more steers in ten minutes than any man in Arizona, and that settled it. I retorted some acrimonious. Bill was not polite. Diplomatic relations were busted, and one of us called the other a liar. I don't remember which one it was, but that makes no difference now.

The room was full of the boys, some playing cards and some at the bar, where Three Fingered Pete and Dutch Henry were serving drinks. When Bill and I stepped back and dropped our hands to our

guns, they all respected our feelings and acted according. Dutch and Pete flopped to the floor behind the bar. Seven or eight of the boys broke for the safe. Of course at the time I was tuned up to the limit, but afterward I remembered those fellows and laughed. They lined up, each fellow with his hands on the shoulders of the man in front, and stooping over with his head turned sideways, for all the world like a chorus-girl line in a "goo-goo" song. Pap Johnson said reprovingly: "Boys, boys!" and took the floor behind the ice-box for his, and Windy Jenkins hollered: "Wait a minute," as he skipped for the back door. He might as well have said: "King's ex, I've got my fingers crossed."

Now, make no mistake—but you won't, because you knew those boys. They was n't afraid; you could n't *scare* those fellows. But they had sense. If Bill and I had a difference of opinion, that was our business, not theirs. And if we wanted to settle it by shooting holes in each other, that also was our business. So they ducked.

I knew there was n't any use trying to fool around and shoot Bill in the leg or arm. I'd seen Bill shoot when he thought he *had* to shoot, and under those circumstances Bill shot straight and quick, mind you, *mighty* quick. So I decided the only thing that would leave me behind to herd the elusive maverick and eat the base-born hominy and hog was to beat him to it, and I had a sneaking notion that I was just a little bit quicker on the draw and pull than he was.

We stood there maybe ten seconds—it seemed to me like an hour—looking each other in the eye, and both crazy mad. If you box or fist-fight with a man, watch his eyes; you can tell every time he means to hit out. Same way in a shooting scrape. The man don't live that can draw and shoot without it showing in his eyes. Bill knew that as well as I did. So there we stood, glaring away, each waiting for the other to make the move that meant almost certain death to one or both of us. Bill always had more patience than I had, and in a mix-up such as we were in that gave him the advantage, for it's a curious thing that when two men of equal skill are facing each other as we were, it ain't the fellow that decides to shoot first that usually gets his lead planted earliest. His eye betrays his intention. Well, my nerves would have twisted up in little knots in about five seconds more, and I would have probably done something foolish and Bill would have potted me, but just before I blew up a voice at the saloon door said: "Hello!" soft and sweet, and "retardo" on the "lo."

Now, if that had been a man's voice neither of us would have paid any attention to it, or else we would have both turned in and licked the everlasting daylights out of him for interfering with two gentlemen who were trying to settle a scientific difference—according to how mad we were. But it was n't. On the contrary, quite the reverse.

I saw Bill's glance waver, and I knew Bill could n't shoot a man that was n't looking, any more than he could wear a stiff collar; so, my curiosity being some aroused, I turned toward the door.

I almost hate to tell you, it was so lovely. There on the top step, just inside the screen door, was the sweetest, cleanest, prettiest girl baby you ever saw. All dressed up in a white lawn suit, with a blue sash, white half-hose that showed her dimpled knees and fat little legs, white shoes, and a white bonnet with a lace frill around the front, tied under her dimpled chin with a big white ribbon. Gee! but she was the prettiest little thing that ever struck Arizona, bar none. I took one look and said: "Angel, angel!" You see, I went daffy at once.

"Hello!" she repeated as she looked round the room. "It is a game? Oh, I see. I spy!" Then she paddled over to the end of the bar, pointed one fat little finger at Pap Johnson behind the ice-box, shouted gleefully: "I spy!" and ran to Bill Jernigan. She slapped old Bill on his chap-covered legs and said:

"One, two, free for you! Now you're it! All the res' is home free."

Then she threw both arms around Bill's left leg and waited for the boys to come "home." You ought to have seen Bill. He looked at me sort of dazed like, then looked down at the baby, then looked away far off somewhere, and said in a faint whisper: "Well, I'm darned!" And if he said it once he said it twenty times. Just stood there like a human hitching-post and phonograph combined and said: "Well, I'm darned!"

The boys all gathered round from their safety corners, looking as sheepish as if the teacher had caught them chewing gum, but I was too much interested in Angel to pay any attention to them then. I always was fond of dogs and children and things like that. I knelt down, so as to get somewhere near on a level with that little white bonnet, and asked:

"Whose little girl are you, honey?"

"Mamma's," was the prompt reply.

"I'd bet a stack of blues on that," said I. "But what's your name?"

"Anna Louise, thank you."

"You're welcome. All right. I'll believe that, even. Anna Louise goes with me, but Anna Louise what?"

"Nuffin. Jes' Anna Louise."

"And where is mamma?"

"Oh, she's right over there;" and she waved her hand vaguely around to embrace 'most three-quarters of the compass. Then she proposed breathlessly: "Le's play 'Lunnon Bridge.' It's the mos'est fun!"

Now, of course what we ought to have done was take her out and hunt up her mother at once, but I would have fought any man that proposed it. I wanted to get acquainted, so I said: "Sure. We'll all play 'London Bridge,' but, on the dead, Angel, we've all forgotten how. You see"—apologetically—"we've been kind of running to 'I Spy' and 'Drop the Handkerchief' lately, and——"

She took Bill and me over by the faro table, where the other boys couldn't hear, and explained things. We were both down on the floor, so she could whisper, and she got so excited and busy that every once in a while she would just make motions and stutter, her ideas coming faster than she could corral words to fit them. She punctuated the important remarks by poking one of us with that little fat forefinger, and if she didn't divide up even on the pokes Bill would hunch up a little nearer to get his. I could see Bill was all to the bad over her—he would have let her have his gun to play with if she had asked him.

Don't suppose you've played London Bridge recently? I thought not. Come to think, I have n't played it since that day myself; but I remember all about it. It's like this: two of the party—that was Angel and Bill—agree which shall be "pumpkin pie" and which "diamond ring," but they must n't tell which is which. That's a dead secret. Then these two wise ones stand facing each other and make a bridge with their arms by holding each other's finger tips. Then everybody lines up, and you sing the song as you file under the bridge. As each one passes, he is caught by lowering the outstretched arms and given a choice between "pumpkin pie" and "diamond ring." His choice decides which pier of the bridge he shall line up behind, and when all have chosen, the two piers clasp hands, every one in each line throws his arms about the waist of the one in front of him, and "pumpkin pies" and "diamond rings" have a tug-of-war until one side pulls the other forward.

Bill enjoyed being poked in the face so much with that fat finger I believe he would have kept that poor little kid there for an hour, explaining, but when she saw how Bill liked it she began giving him most of the pokes, so I soon broke up *that* party. I explained the rules to the boys, and Bill and Angel took their places in the middle of the floor, the former very solemn and the latter with her eyes dancing and a dimpled face that would set you crazy. Bill was certainly a pleasing vision. He was six feet four, and built according, and when he doubled up in the middle to reach Angel's finger tips he was "Salute your partners" to the life.

Then we all struck up the song. No "la-la" business for the Angel. Not much. We had to sing the words, and sing them right. It must be the real thing—no less. So we all sang:

"London Bridge is falling down,
 Falling down, falling down,
 London Bridge is falling down,
 My fair lady,"

while Dutch Henry marked time on the bar with a bung-starter, and Three Fingered Pete hit a free-lunch plate with a knife handle. That saloon had seen some curious things, but I guess our "London Bridge" party holds the record.

I was first in line, and having basely eavesdropped to get the proper tip, I chose "pumpkin pie" and was gleefully ordered back of Angel. The next three or four chose "diamond ring" and lined up behind Bill. Along came Fatty Richards and, true to nature, he preferred pumpkin pie to a diamond ring. All the rest were for diamonds—wanted to give them to Angel, I judge. Well, we all lined up. Angel's two little hands were completely lost in Bill's big, hard fists, me clasping Angel about her plump little waist and being awful careful about the sash, and Fatty hanging on to me to beat the band. Fatty never could think fast, but his heart was in the right place. I could tell by the way he locked onto me and breathed hard that he was going to make the struggle of his life to pull that line our way, all for the honor of the lady. He had n't figured how long her shoulder sockets would hold together.

On the other side was Bill and ten or twelve of the huskiest boys in Arizona. But land o' love! when Pete said: "Go!" those boys pulled and grunted and shuffled their feet something awful, but our side gradually pulled them the whole length of the room. It was a glorious victory, only I had a bit of trouble keeping Fatty from going too fast, he being still enthusiastic and I not wanting to hurt the leading lady. The Angel was pleased as punch, and crowed with delight. She wanted to do it all over again, but Bill refused. Said he was all tired out, and she was too strong for him. Then he swung her up on the bar and gravely asked her what she would have to drink. She stood there a moment, calmly surveying things, and said complacently:

"Oh, I see. Soda-water! I fink I'll take choc'late."

Pete told her that as proprietor of that establishment he was mighty sorry to be compelled to inform her that the soda-water was all in the wash that week, but they had some lemons, and did she think a lemonade would do? Yes, she thought a lemonade would do. Then Pete asked Bill what he would have, and Bill said far be it from him to indulge even in implied criticism of a lady's taste in liquids, and he guessed he would have the same. Then Tucson Ike took the floor and seemed to voice the general sentiment when in a short but feeling speech he stated his belief that the youth and beauty and chivalry of Paradise were not all concentrated in the name and form of Jernigan, and we

would all have lemonade. Dutch Henry had only eight lemons, lemonade not being a powerful popular drink and whisky sours taking too long to make, so he used a whole one in the Angel's glass, and the rest of us got what was left.

When the drinks were all in hand I got on a chair and made an eloquent, ornate, and highly popular speech, in which I said that never before had I seen the wisdom of naming our thriving municipality "Paradise," and that at times it had seemed to me the party or parties naming it must have gotten mixed on their Scripture or else have waxed sarcastic; but that now a great light, the bright white light of truth, had busted in on my alleged intellect and illuminated the inmost recesses of an ever sluggish mind ("Hear, hear!" from the boys). An Angel had come to Paradise, I said, a sweet little angel straight from heaven, or St. Louis, or somewhere. Her given name might be Anna Louise, as she had told us, but if so it was a mistake. Angel she was, and Angel she must be. And inasmuch as she had no other name, according to her own statement, a statement I presumed no gentleman present would doubt (loud cries of "No, no!" from the boys), I took the liberty of giving her the name of the fair city she had honored with her presence, and proposed a toast to "Angel Paradise."

Well, you never saw a toast excite such enthusiasm—certainly not one drunk in lemonade.

As we were finishing the drink, the door opened with some violence, and a chap rushed in, clad in spats, a white waistcoat, a stiff collar, a derby hat, and some other useless outer habiliments. His glance fell on Angel, and he yelled: "Me child, me child!"

Angel stood there on the bar, waving a chubby hand, and said: "Hello, pop!"

The distracted father rushed toward his offspring just as I happened to stretch my leg a little. He fell over my foot and rammed his derby hat, his head being in it at the time, against Bill Jernigan's front waistband with much precipitancy. Bill let out a grunt, but grasped him by the arms and set him on his feet. We then extracted his head from his hat just before he perished, and Bill inquired politely who in Arizona and California and Mexico and other places he was, and what in a-good-many-other-things he meant by butting into a total stranger in that way.

The gentleman said, in a voice choked with emotion: "Spare the child," which really was n't much of an answer.

Bill replied: "Why, you ornery, pork-brained, slab-sided son-of-a-goat, what kind of loco-weed did you have for breakfast? Light and hitch and cool off. You'll have brain fever or fits or something in a minute. You don't deserve to have a baby, you're so careless of her.

But if you can prove ownership to this orange blossom, we'll deliver her wherever you say, and there'll be no freight charges."

Now, the fellow was really alarmed about the baby, and, come to think of it, I guess you could n't blame him. It turned out he had learned all he knew about the West from reading dime novels when he was a kid, so much of his information was erroneous. He could n't understand all of a sudden that some of those boys were from the East and college-bred; it never occurred to him that all of us were human, and to have that sweet little child with us for a half-hour was a breath of Kingdom Come; he had n't lived and sweated and worked and played and been primitive under the great blue sky, and he just naturally did n't know. But he soon calmed down, and Bill introduced him all around, he being Mr. Hawthorne, of Boston, touring Arizona for his wife's health. He explained they had stopped at the Cowboy's Retreat for a few hours' rest, and Angel had wandered away while they were manicuring their nails or some such foolishness.

So Bill turned to Angel and said: "Come, sister, get on my shoulder, and it's us for mamma." Then he swung Angel up and strode out of the saloon. Papa and I came next, and the boys fell in behind, two and two. I started the song and we went down to the hotel singing.

"London Bridge is falling down,
Falling down, falling down,
London Bridge is falling down,
My fair lady,"

until you could have heard us some miles, I reckon. Bill was carrying his Stetson in his left hand, and supporting Angel with his right. She had her left hand firmly imbedded in his curly wool, for safety, and was beating time with her heels on his chest. And papa! I never saw a man come out stronger on "London Bridge" than papa did.

Papa introduced us to mamma and explained we were friends of his that had found Angel and looked after her. He then invited us all down to Boston, and we agreed to go. They were just starting for Tucson in the hotel surrey, and we were soon forced to say good-by to our little Angel Paradise. The blessed little baby patted old Bill on the cheek and said: "I love 'oo," and then, seeing I looked disappointed, which I was, she graciously said: "An' oo' too. An, all of 'oo," as she took us all in with a wave of the hand. And the last we saw of her she was flirting mamma's handkerchief from the back of the surrey as it disappeared in the dust around the bend.

On our way back to Pete's, Bill put his arm around my shoulders and said:

"Lonesome, I'm some fond of red pepper on hash myself."

I grinned a little, and he went on:

"And, Lonesome, come to think it over, that Denver fellow was a rotten bad actor, anyhow."

We had reached Pete's and were just going in when he squeezed me a little:

"Furthermore, Lonesome, when I was talkin' about ropin' steers I excepted you in my mind all the time."

And we never did finish that fight.



HAUNTED

BY ELSA BARKER

WHAT is that sound on the wind, my love,
That little wail of fright?
Is it the cry of a lone lost dove
Somewhere up in the boughs above
Our window this wild night?

What is that shadow along the wall
That wavers and is still?
It is very faint and very small
To fill my soul with this weird appall,
These presages of ill!

O love, there are fingers upon my hair,
And yours are fast in mine!
Is it a breath of the midnight air
That blows on my forehead and lingers there,
Or is it a ghostly sign?

Gather me close in your strong arms, dear,
And hold me tenderly;
For I dare not whisper the thing I fear,
Unless I feel you near—ah, near
To the throbbing heart of me!

It is not a shadow that wavers there,
Nor a dove that moans in pain,
Nor a breath of the night wind on my hair;
But the pilgrim Soul from the realm of air
That knocked at our door in vain.

FROM THE LAND OF OUGHT

AN EMOTIONAL MONOTONE

By Jane Belfield

FOR a long while the woman ran on blindly; then suddenly, because her strength was spent, she sank upon the ground in a little open space. She listened—no sound of pursuit! She looked back—no trace of the path by which she had come!

Then with a glad sound she threw wide her arms.

"I am escaped! Free! Alone at last!"

A moment the woman stood hesitating in the little green circle, which seemed to have no outlet, then took a timid step forward. Truly this was a strange country into which unthinkingly she had wandered, for where no thoroughfare seemed to be, the path opened instantly before her feet, whichever way she turned. Without effort, she strayed fitfully, all sense of direction lost. For in this new country the woman owed no obligation to any one; neither was there any "ought" to heed, as in the familiar places whence she had fled.

Stopping now and then to pluck a flower of strange scent yet sweet with promise, or listening to song-birds of brilliant plumage, never native to the world she had left, the woman wandered aimlessly, her senses alert, intoxicated, as the underbrush parted before her.

By and by she peeped through the trees to watch the restless tumbling of a torrent in a green, shaded dell. Whence came the water?

As if in answer to her desires, a path appeared, and some impelling force wafted her on the way of her whim. Without effort, she climbed the hill and came out upon a grassy plain. And then, quite suddenly, a familiar scent reached her—the smell of burning leaves and a little wood fire, that always, even in the world she had left, brought vividly back a certain old memory.

Once—it was almost her first memory, so she must have been a very small child—she had walked through such a wood with her father, long since dead, and they had made a little fire of dried leaves and sticks and roasted the nuts they gathered.

Of course—right well she knew the two figures coming towards her, hand in hand, out of the wood and down the hill! She leapt forward, and was carried along so quickly that she was by the man's side before he and the child had reached the little fire.

"Father!" the woman cried beseechingly, with outstretched arms.
"Father!"

But the man did not hear the world of entreaty in her eager voice; he looked beyond her empty hands—unseeing—the while he clasped more closely the tiny hand of his companion. Then the woman wished that the child would raise its face—and instantly the blue eyes lifted solemnly and looked into hers.

"Farder," lisped the little one, pointing to the blaze, "Farder, build a fire—like that."

The man smiled at the child and began gathering a great armful of twigs.

Then the woman drew aside, watching as the child brought bunches of many-colored dry leaves tightly pressed to its breast, and, shouting with delight, opened wide its tiny arms to let their burden fall at the man's feet; and the man swept the leaves into a great pile, putting the sticks on top; and the man and the child watched as the twigs crackled, while the bright flames darted high above the child's head; and the woman watching the two began to think again.

The face of the man she knew by the locket her mother had always worn; but the face had not lived in her memory as had the smell of the autumn fire. Long and searchingly she regarded him now. What sort of a man was he—the father dead too soon for a little woman-child of six? And the child! Yearningly the woman leaned towards her first self—and, behold! she stood on the other side of the fire!

"Little child! Little child who might have been almost anything—little child, look up!"

And again the little one raised serious eyes from regarding the fire.

"Farder, is the fire goin' out?"

The woman covered her face—these two, unconscious of her—unneeding! She moved sorrowfully, slowly, away—silently passing over the brow of the hill, turning but once to look as the man and the child raked the nuts from among the hot ashes.

On the other side of the hill it was spring again, and at the very foot there rose an archway of flowers. Beneath the hanging spring blossoms a girl stood, all in white. In her hand she held a roll of white parchment tied with a long blue ribbon; and the girl opened the roll smilingly and began to read. Then the woman passed through the first gateway of flowers and once more began to think, for well she knew the words of the roll—her first poem of hope—the valedictory written on the threshold—before she understood.

Flowers all along the way—spring time, riot of blossoms, whispering leaves, singing birds, and talking water! Strange notes in the woods—

hints of intoxicating marvels not understood—ghosts and goblins—
fairy time—waking time—the distant pipes o' Pan!

Now a stream upon whose green bank the same white-robed, girlish figure lay dreaming, her fingers idly slipped between the covers of a book. The blossoms had ripened into the flowers of June. A youth bent over her, holding out two deep red roses. The girl took one, pressed it in the book, and fastened the other on her lover's coat.

Passionately the woman gazed into the eyes of the girl, to bid her beware; and unheedingly the young eyes mirrored the warning look. Then the woman glanced at the youth, but the unseen force hurriedly carried her away; for well again she knew whither the road led that opened now wide and smilingly before; and ever on her track pressed those other two, the youth and the maid, till they all passed together beneath a second gateway of flowers—orange blossoms—ah, yes, and a wedding bell!

True, the bell was of white rose buds, yet to the woman the bell tolled, so that she pressed both hands to her ears and was wafted strongly away by the tide of her desire. What right had memory to assail her here? Had she not escaped from thinking?

Rapidly borne along, she did not notice that the sky was fast darkening, the birds had ceased their song, the flowers long since withered. Suddenly a mighty wind arose, stronger even than the force of the woman's desire, so that she was tossed from place to place in the leafless forest, now become a desert. Neither could she hear any sound, save the roar of the hurricane, drowning even the piercing sweetness of the music that until now had filled the secret places of her soul—she who listened ever to the pipes o' Pan!

Then, lo! in the distance another gateway loomed against the black sky, and the woman strove with all her might to reach this last arch of flowers, beyond which there is nothing but the rest that holds the All. And to her tortured sense the toll of the bell that hung in this gateway was the very voice of heart's desire. Yet, strive as she might, she could not pass beneath it, for hands unseen that clutched and held her back—hands whose touch she loved and knew, even in her agonized striving, for the tiny hands of a child.

Yet ever the whirlwind grew in might and gathered into its embrace even love and memory, so that she felt the clinging hands no more, and blindly at the last was swept towards the third gateway.

Suddenly—without warning—the wind flung her against an obstacle in the way, and she perceived a great tower looming above the topmost dead trees. Brokenly the woman gathered herself together—for she had been sorely hurt by the force of the blow—and, lo! one stood at the foot of the tower, gravely regarding her!

Now, the face of the man was not known to the woman, for never had it appeared in her familiar world, so that she would have passed on—for the bell tolled again invitingly—but that the man put out his hand and clasped hers.

"You hear it!" she cried, impatiently flinging off his grasp. "Do not seek to stay me—you hear the call!"

"I am sent," the man replied, and gently bent his head to meet her troubled gaze, "I am sent to show you the way out."

"But you—who are you?" the woman cried again. "There is no way out—and if there were, I have escaped!"

"I am one who also was lost here; and I am sent to you by the Keeper of the Tower—because I know the way whence you came." He answered calmly, yet in the grave voice there was an echo of some half forgotten, wholly ungrasped, sweetness.

Slowly the woman raised her eyes above the dead trees of the forest to where the tower loomed.

"Is there," she whispered bewilderedly, as the bell ceased tolling and the wind died into a great stillness, "a Keeper in the tower?"

The man bent his head. "The Keeper abides; but we who have tried the way are sent each with the needed message—as you will be after you have returned."

"I will not return," the woman answered in her great perplexity.

"With me—I am going with you;" and he clasped her hand again.

"There were—things I thought to find here—many things without an 'ought,'" she faltered.

"But we are going into the things that need you—into service—yes, and happiness," he made answer firmly.

Then the woman stretched out both hands. "But I do not hear—I cannot hear the pipes o' Pan! It is so cold and still!" she cried.

"Listen—you do not listen!"

Sweet and solemn, low and piercingly, the beloved music sounded through the desolate grove. Then the woman turned appealingly to her companion.

"I do not understand. Shall you go with me beyond this place?"

"I do not see the way beyond—*now*—but in the centre of the labyrinth the Keeper knows."

Then the woman put her hands in the hands of the man and looked long and solemnly into his eyes; and even as she looked the hills grew green again and the forest put forth buds.

"The landscape is changing! We have reached the edge of the forest. You have let go my hands!"

Then he who was sent turned to her smilingly. "Do you see who lies sleeping—waiting for you—on the verge of the woods?"

And, still smiling, as the woman stooped and lifted the child fondly to her breast, he faded from the landscape of familiar things.

"Mother!" The firm little cheek, warm and flushed with sleep, nestled against hers, and the strong, tiny arms clasped her jealously. "Mother, where were you when I was asleep?"



LIGHTHEART LANE

BY HILTON R. GREER

WHERE birds in hedges blossomy
Their lyric notes repeat,
Till morning drips with melody
Mellifluously sweet;

Where bees from brimming buttercups
Ambrosial nectars drain—
O ho, but let's go loitering!
O hey, for Lightheart Lane!

Where ways stretch cool and shadowy
To lure the laggard feet,
And little winds leap laughingly
Down ranks of rippling wheat;
Where wild blooms pelt the butterflies
With gusts of rosy rain—
O ho, but let's go loitering!
O hey, for Lightheart Lane!

Let's leave the clash and clamoring,
The dust and din and heat;
Let's quit the cramping sordidness
And struggle of the street;
For one full day of joyousness
Let's slip the gyves of pain—
O ho, but let's go loitering!
O hey, for Lightheart Lane!

WAYS OF THE HOUR

A DEPARTMENT OF CURRENT COMMENT AND
CRITICISM—SANE, STIMULATING, OPTIMISTIC

BRAIN WORK AND MIND WORRY

TO separate mental labor from mental worry is becoming one of the studies of the medical fraternity. There used to be, and still are, great mind specialists, so called; but in these days of rush and anxiety almost every physician is a mind, a nerve, or a brain specialist.

Our modes of life, the pace we maintain, and our great ambition for money or preferment, account for the prevalence of the worry ailment. However, we do not want an explanation so much as a remedy. As individuals we need individual relief, a method we can work out ourselves with ourselves—a kind of personal treatment we can apply irrespective of the doctor or his prescription.

That brain work and mind worry can be separated is sure. People of placid disposition can work hard when necessary and rarely worry—though there are not many of that kind. So much comes to harass in these days that while one may succeed in throwing off some big problem for a while, he gets tangled up in the little things that pull and push and maintain an almost constant pressure.

The man who can do hard and effective brain work during the day and then go home, banish his cares, and take his ease, is a man to be envied. He is all too scarce. Witness the increase in the men one meets who are prematurely gray or bald or wrinkled. The man without a wrinkle is either a man without a care or one who has mastered the secret of working without worrying.

The late Chancellor Runyon of New Jersey, one of the hardest worked men that ever sat on the bench of that state, was noted for the number of important cases he tried and the strong and permanent character of the decisions he rendered. Late every afternoon he went home and at once exchanged his shoes for a pair of comfortable old slippers. In referring to his habits, the Chancellor was accustomed to remark:

"When I come home and take off my shoes, I at the same time take off all my cares and worries. When I put on my slippers, I slip on also a feeling of ease and comfort. I banish from my mind the cases that absorb me all day at the office or in the court-room. I am

ready to enjoy my library, to play a game of whist, or to entertain company, as the case may be."

That is where all the work-burdened men would like to get. It is purely a personal matter. The will must come in to assist the brain. Unless a man has abused his digestive functions and upset his nervous system, he can, in most instances, acquire what has been called the will habit. When he has learned to go to sleep and wants to go to sleep, to get the rest a sound sleep affords, he has won half the battle. With a reasonable amount of exercise to add to the sleep, the problem of working the brain and banishing the worry has been very largely solved. Not many visits from physicians, nor much medicine, will be required. The man will have become his own specialist.

"It is worry that kills, and not work," has become almost an axiom. Worry is really a disease, or a species of disease. Specialists allege that the increase of insanity, and the noticeable prevalence of nervous prostrations and kindred complaints, are directly traceable to worry. Certainly the haggard, worried faces one meets in every walk of life go far to substantiate this theory. An eminent physician recently stated that in his opinion worry would soon be one of the national maladies, as well as the cause of many maladies of national prevalence.

It is worth while attempting to remedy so unfortunate and universal a habit. Cheerfulness is the great antidote. The two cannot exist in the same body. The man who whistles at his work will not die from worry.

Then there is another thing to do. The circulation of worry is too large—it should be stopped. There are too many people passing their worries along. They should be stopped. Worry breeds worry. It does not hurt to make work contagious. Ordinarily, the more work, the less worry. While bereavement, sickness, and misfortune are responsible for much worry, they need not be advertised.

Who will preach a crusade for cheerfulness in this period of reform?

LAWRENCE S. MOTT

KILL

KILL! Kill! Kill! The word is on every tongue from the time the big-game season opens in the Far West until it closes, two months later. Every man's hand seems to be against the wild things of the mountains—the harmless wild things which lend to the forest half its charm.

If it were the aim of the people to exterminate the deer, elk, and mountain sheep, they could not kill with more avidity. The question

of skill does not enter into it. If an elk is close enough to singe his hair with the powder, no matter, kill him! If the pack horses are already loaded to the limit, if not a pound of the meat is to be touched, if the head is worthless as a trophy and the horns valueless, no matter, kill just the same. The law permits each person his two elk, so take the limit!

If an animal is crippled, do not bother to trail him—let him go; the wolves will pull him down eventually, or he will fall and starve—that elk with the shattered shoulder or the deer with the dragging hind leg. And that band of mountain sheep! Get them on a ledge or in a cul-de-sac and shoot them down, ewes and lambs alike. Exterminate them! The law allows you a sheep each, and there are half a dozen in your party. The game wardens are not difficult to dodge, and if you do not get these sheep, some other fellow will. What difference to you if, when the shooting season is closed, the mountains are strewn with the carcasses of elk from which only the heads or horns have been taken, while hundreds of pounds of meat decay on the side hills, and the line of elk that treks to the south of Jackson's Hole is shorter than it was last year, and far, far shorter than it was the year before? What does it matter to you if, a comparatively few years hence, the elk tracks and the print of the deer's pointed hoof are gone forever, if the forests are depleted and silent and a pair of antlers has become a curiosity? You have had your sport.

And this is the way in which nine-tenths of the people reason who hunt in the big-game season.

The real sportsman is not a menace to the game; he is its best friend, its protector. He is as jealous of it as though it were his own property, and he has a clearly defined code of honor in regard to the killing of it. But real sportsmen are rare in the big-game country.

Nor does the slaughter end with the shooting season. Over in the Hoodoo Mountains, in Wyoming, not more than three hundred yards from the boundary line of the Yellowstone Park, two men from Gardiner, Montana, have built a cabin concealed from the main trail by a thicket of quaking asp. Here they hunt and kill in defiance of the state and federal laws.

They have cut the timber to build their cabin without a permit from the supervisor of the Yellowstone Forest Reserve. They have slaughtered elk for bear bait, as the traps and pens around the carcasses testify. There are deer hides in their cabin to give silent evidence against them. They have been trailed inside the boundary line of the Yellowstone Park, where they have undoubtedly hunted. They have spent the winter months in this isolated cabin, after the bear have denned up and there is no game to hunt save that game to kill which is in violation of the law. The local game warden has been furnished with

the names of those men and the evidence against them. He has taken no action whatever.

What the big-game sections of the West need are more game wardens, and better ones—honest and active men, like those of the Maine woods; higher licenses, and the requirement of stricter references for guides, that will bar the irresponsible and unscrupulous who now act in that capacity and will violate any game law for a ten-dollar bill; also, the reduction from two elk and two deer in a season to one elk and one deer, which should be sufficient for any reasonable person, when the scarcity of game and the number of hunters are considered.

CAROLINE LOCKHART

THE MINX IN FICTION

THERE was a time when the book heroine was always "a perfect woman nobly planned"; to-day she is invariably full of frailties and "planned" on very faulty lines.

"But she is true to life!" exclaims the champion of "best sellers."

Undoubtedly the world is full of most imperfect specimens of the human kind; beings verging upon perfection are rare, as they have always been, and therefore the introduction of either class into fiction is rather a question of taste than truth.

Art that presents to us examples of average human beings, or those below the average, can hardly be pronounced "more truthful" than that which paints the human being in his highest development. Yet such would seem to be the verdict of the majority of modern fiction makers, who offer us, on every hand, studies of individuals with whom we thank our stars we are not forced to associate.

The modern heroine, be she the Gibson girl or the bluestocking, seems to be primarily created for the purpose of making trouble in the camp. She is bound to harass the reader with her demand for too much freedom, or with her efforts to restrict things. She comes upon the scene not to delight us, but to embody some sociological or psychological problem. She comes never to comfort, but always to worry those that wait to greet her. She has theories which tend to unsettle the present social order, and dares defy conventions that she may live her life more fully and abundantly, according to her own progressive definition. In short, the paragon in literature has been succeeded by the minx, if this term may be stretched a bit to cover that steadily increasing company of unattractive, unrestful, undeveloped, over-developed, degenerate, and altogether irritating women in modern fiction.

It is superfluous to point out the reasons plentiful which make for the exclusion of the paragon. All healthful human natures have quite too much original sin in them to feel at home in the society of conventional perfection. They do not find upon their calling lists people that are possessed of it, nor have they any wish to put them there. They may put up saints and madonnas upon their walls, but they prefer to ask the prima-donnas in to dine.

One might gather from the apparent deterioration in the book heroine that in the world at large there has been a general lowering of feminine standards. But this is contrary to the facts. The standard among women is certainly higher to-day than it has ever been; her opportunities, her privileges, her attainments, are such as would have struck dumb with amazement an Elizabethan woman. Who can doubt that there is now in the world a far greater proportion of charming, virtuous women than it has ever held before? The heroine is surely as much alive to-day in *fact* as she has ever been. And why not then in *fiction*?

The fault cannot be in the woman's qualifications, but must be sought for in the present prevailing attitude towards her. It is true that there is now far less false sentiment and hypocrisy expended on feminine themes than there was wont to be; but there is, also, less true sentiment and less fervent devotion.

Undoubtedly the modern woman, in order to secure her equal rights, has stepped down from her pedestal, and in securing these has drawn upon herself more than equality of critical scrutiny. She is a comrade, a good-fellow, an athlete, and a clubwoman, but she is quite too near to be idealized, and she lacks a certain indefinable charm and aloofness which were her own when she was viewed upon that old-time elevation. No one would wish her back to a helpless and mediæval dependency; no one would wish to wrest from her those rightful and well-earned privileges which now are hers; but for the sake of Art, we cannot but desire that she mount once again upon that graceful pedestal where she may stand revealed a bit above the common level.

CAROLINE TICKNOR

QUATRAIN

BY GRACE F. PENNYPACKER

IF it be not for me God's plan
From sudden death to spare,
May some good deed performed for man
Be my last prayer.



MRS. GREEN'S METHOD

"I've been interrupted by agents all the morning," complained Mrs. Tucker, running into Mrs. Green's to borrow a cup of sugar. "First there was a man with all sorts of brushes; then there was a lady-agent with glue; next came a woman with——"

"I know," said Mrs. Green. "They've all been here, too. The town's full of them. Now I never have the slightest trouble discouraging even the most persistent. I look them straight in the eye, say firmly that I don't want anything, and that settles it. I never stop to argue with them or——"

"There's one coming now!" exclaimed Mrs. Tucker, drawing back from the window as a middle-aged man, carrying a suit-case, entered the Greens' gate.

"Just listen," said Mrs. Green, rising to answer the bell. "I'll show you how I settle them."

"Is this Mrs. Plumfield Green?" asked the stranger, lifting his hat.

"It is," replied Mrs. Green coldly, "but you can't sell me anything to-day. I don't want anything at all. We have our regular trading places and buy nothing elsewhere. Good morning, sir."

"But——"

"Good morning," returned Mrs. Green pointedly.

The front door closed, not aggressively, merely decisively, and Mrs. Green returned to her guest, who gazed from the window at the retreating man with the suit-case.

"That," said Mrs. Green complacently, "is *my* way of doing it."

Half an hour later, Mrs. Tucker happened to notice Mr. Green going home to luncheon. Beside him walked the man with the suit-case. Clearly here was something that needed explaining. Mrs.

Walnuts and Wine

Tucker, who was not without a fair share of feminine curiosity, returned the cup of sugar the moment the coast was clear. She did not have to wait long for the solving of the mystery.

"Agatha," groaned Mrs. Green, as she opened the door, "you never can guess what a perfectly awful thing I've done! That man with the suit-case *was n't* an agent. He was Plumfield's old college chum. When he arrived unexpectedly this morning Plumfield sent him up here to surprise me."

"Well," returned Mrs. Tucker, "I guess he did it."

Carroll Watson Rankin

A DISTINCTION WITH A DIFFERENCE

By John Wilkes.

A man may rant and a man may rail
When a honk-honk honks at him;
A man may pant and a man may wail
As the honk-honk-honk grows dim;
But the same man smirks and the same man smiles
And to honk-honk-honk is prone—
See the same man's quirks and the same man's wiles
When he gets a honk-honk of his own!

A LEADING QUESTION

The younger teachers of the Lincoln school are telling with glee a great joke on Miss Blank, one of the oldest and most capable instructors in the primary grades of our schools.

It was Harold's first day at school. Miss Blank came down to his desk and said, "What is your name?"

"Harold Smith," the bright youngster replied.

"And how old are you?" went on Miss Blank in her methodical way.

"Six," said Harold. "How old are you?"

And the young teachers are laughing still.

Lucy Hampton

NOT EVEN THE CLOCK

Two ladies were being shown through the State Hospital for the Insane. As they entered a ward, one turned to the other and said, "I wonder if that clock is right?"

An inmate standing near overheard her and instantly replied, "Great Scott, no! It would n't be here if it was!"

E. R. S.



Pears' Soap is good for boys and everyone—It removes the dirt, but not the cuticle—Pears' keeps the skin soft and prevents the roughness often caused by wind and weather—constant use proves it "Matchless for the complexion"

OF ALL SCENTED SOAPS PEARS' OTTO OF ROSE IS THE BEST.

"All rights secured."

In writing to advertisers kindly mention LIPPINCOTT'S.

Walnuts and Wine

OUT OF WORK

One of the Senators from Georgia tells of a ducky in that State who sought work at the hands of a white man. The latter inquired whether the negro had a boat. Upon being answered in the affirmative, he said:

"You see that driftwood floating down the stream?"

"Yassah."

"Then," continued the other, "row out into the river and catch it. I'll give you half of what you bring in."

The ducky immediately proceeded to do as instructed and for a while worked hard. Then, of a sudden, he ceased to labor and pulled for the shore.

"What's the trouble?" asked the employer.

"Look hyar, boss," said the ducky indignantly, "dat wood is jest as much mine as yours. I ain't gwine to give yo' any. So I's outer work again!"

Edwin Tarrisse

WHAT DID HE MEAN?

Patient: "Doctor, do you think I will have to be operated on?"

Doctor: "Well, I hope for the best."

J. M. Hendrickson

THE TALE OF THE SEA-SHELL

By Aljean Edward Starr

A doughty warrior Sword-fish

Had wooed a dainty Trout,

And wedding invitations

Were duly hurried out.

The Cuttle-fishes wrote them

In very blackest ink;

The Flying-fish delivered them

Before the Eel could wink.

The Shrimp was melancholy—

Miss Trout had been his love,

And he'd prepared a homelet

In a little, sheltered cove.

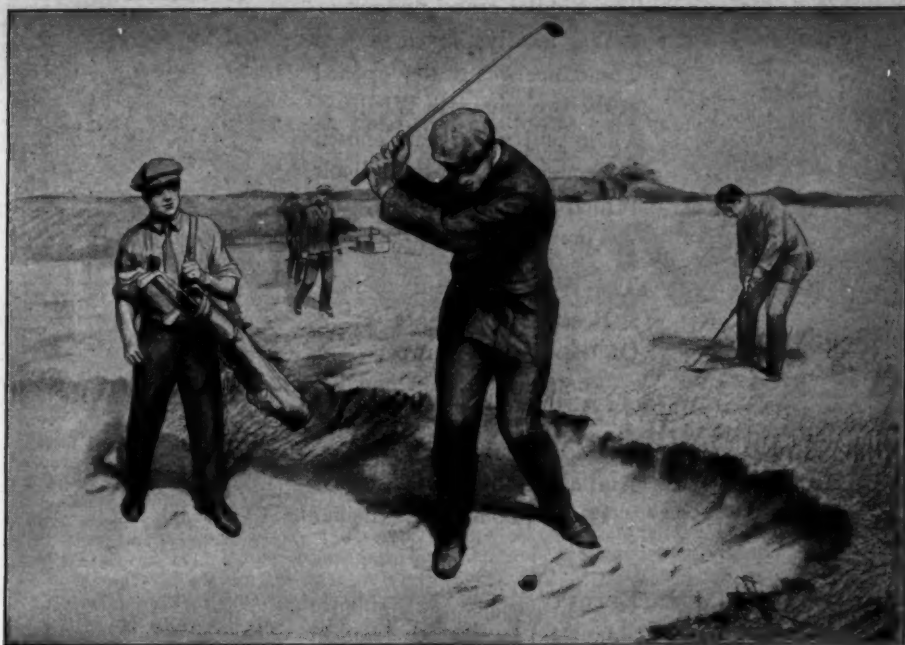
The Walrus preached the sermon,

Arriving there on Skates—

The "Fishing Line" was charging

Such very fishy rates.

Walnuts and Wine



THE GOAL

is easily attained if you have endurance, steady nerves, precision of movement and a clear brain. These depend on the kind of food you eat;

Grape-Nuts

covers the entire field. Made of wheat and barley, including the Phosphate of Potash Nature places under the outer coat of these grains (wasted by the White Flour Miller) for the purpose of rebuilding worn-out and devitalized nerve and brain cells.

They go pretty rapidly in a long, hard game, but are quickly replaced by new cells when Grape-Nuts food is used—chewed dry, or with cream.

"There's a Reason."

Made by the Postum Cereal Co., Ltd., Battle Creek, Mich., U. S. A.

In writing to advertisers kindly mention LIPPINCOTT'S.

Walnuts and Wine

The Fiddler-crabs' fine music
Was mostly played in Scales;
The dance was neatly opened
By two gigantic Whales—
Their pretty partners chosen
From pupils of the schools
Which Miss Trout had attended,
Though 't was against the rules.

The Weakfish got dyspepsia
Because he over-ate
Of the delicious supper
The thrifty Clam had baked.
The Codfish said he never
Had so enjoyed a ball,
And all the fishes in the swim
Had a good time at the haul.

HER MAIDEN EFFORT

A certain judge had been away from his native city for several years, and upon his return found it difficult sometimes to recognize former acquaintances. One morning a youngish woman, accompanied by a tall boy, entered the trolley car and sat down next the judge.

"How do you do, judge?" she said cordially. "I don't believe you remember me? I am Mrs. X."

"Why, so it is! Mrs. X., I am delighted to meet you again. How do you do? And who is this with you? It can't be your son! Bless me, I would not believe you had a son so big."

"Oh, yes," replied the guileless Mrs. X., flattered by his cordiality. "He is my first-born—my maiden effort, judge."

Helen Sherman Griffith

HOW PAT GOT IN

Dr. George A. Gordon, pastor of the Old South Church, Boston, tells how a witty Irishman stood before the gate of the other world, asking for admission. St. Peter refused him, however, telling him he was too great a sinner to enter there, and bade him go away. The man went a little distance from the gate and then crowed three times like a rooster. St. Peter at once threw open the gate and cried out, "Come in, Pat! We'll let by-gones be by-gones!"

Florence Hunt

Details Make The Car

In The Model 24

Rambler

is every feature that makes mechanical excellence and general attractiveness.

Constructive Details

Motor—four-cylinder verticle, $4\frac{1}{2}$ inch bore, $4\frac{1}{2}$ inch stroke that gives full 25-30 horse power at the road wheels.

Transmission—sliding gear of a special type in which all trouble in shifting gears is absolutely avoided.

Final drive—propeller shaft and bevel gears with floating type rear axle fitted with ball and roller bearings throughout. **Wheel base**—108 inches, wheels 34 inch with 4 inch tires.

All accessories, such as mechanical sight feed lubricator, circulating pump, ignition timer, etc., are of the latest and most approved types.

Equipment includes full cape top, five lamps, horn, tools, storage battery, etc.

Price, as below, \$2,000.

Our catalogue, describing this and five other models—\$950 to \$2500—is at your service.

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Branches:

Chicago, Milwaukee,
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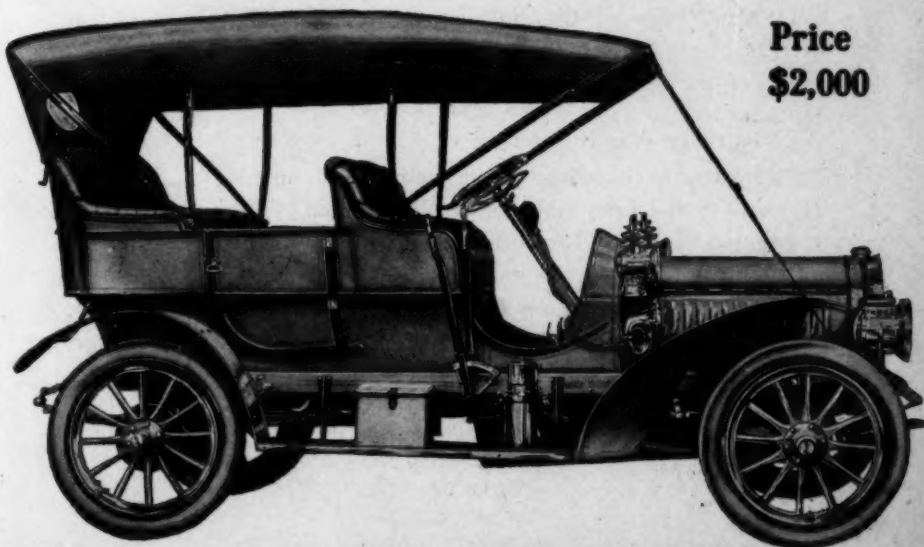
Boston,

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San Francisco.

Representatives in all leading cities.

Thomas B. Jeffery & Company



Price
\$2,000

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Walnuts and Wine

INFORMATION

The big bell in the city hall tower had just banged forth the noon hour, and the office buildings were emptying throngs of workers into the streets to fill the lunch rooms.

In an elaborate office, seated in a large chair, with his feet comfortably resting on the edge of the manager's desk, was Plugsy, the office-boy of Janworth and Co., brokers. His head was cocked on one side, and with evident relish he was puffing a huge cigar which his employer had neglected to finish.

Suddenly the door opened and Mr. Whiff, a client of the firm, rushed in.

"Where's Mr. Janworth?" he demanded excitedly.

"W'a's that?" said Plugsy, slowly removing the cigar from the far corner of his mouth.

"I want Mr. Janworth right away. Where is he?" repeated Whiff.

Just then the bell of a fire-engine clanged below, and Plugsy leisurely rose and walked to the window.

"Gee!" he said thoughtfully. "People do git skeered o' them fire carts, all right, all right." Turning around, he continued: "Boss ain't in. I'm runnin' th' business just now. Want any quotations, or——"

"No, you idiot!" yelled the client. "Where has he gone--down-stairs?"

"Yep."

"Will he be back after lunch?"

"Naw," yawned the future firm; "that's what he went out after."

W. Dayton Wegfarth

THE ACTRESS WAS SUSPICIOUS

There is a charming young actress who numbers among her friends a well known clubman of Washington. During her recent engagement in the national capital, the player was lamenting to her admirer the fact that she was getting thinner and thinner.

"Oh, not at all!" came from the gallant clubman, who knew the lady's detestation of too lean a figure. "On the contrary, I assure you, you're as plump as a partridge!"

The young woman surveyed him for a moment through narrowed eyes. "Are you paying me a compliment, or are you making game of me?" she asked.

T.

Walnuts and Wine

The HOUSE OF SAPOLIO

In every walk of life

SAPOLIO

has proved a solid foundation on which to build a reputation or to keep a home clean. Every child knows what SAPOLIO is and what it will do, so widely is its honorable record established. Its hall mark is "Service," its pride is cleanliness. The esteem won by SAPOLIO as a home keeper guarantees the worth of its kindred product, HAND SAPOLIO, the safest soap for Toilet and Bath.

In writing to advertisers, kindly mention LIPPINCOTT'S.

Walnuts and Wine

WHAT DID SHE MEAN?

Mrs. Armitage had a negro servant who continually prated of a certain Mrs. Reed for whom she formerly worked. Weary of hearing Mrs. Reed quoted so often, the mistress asked one day:

"Well, Samantha, what kind of work did you do at Mrs. Reed's, any way?"

"Well, honey, I cooked foh huh, I did, an' I cleaned foh huh, an' I swep' foh huh, an' I washed huh pussonel appea'ance."

E. W. Sherman

HIRSUTIC

By Minna Irving

We hired a son of Erin's isle,
But newly o'er the briny,
And dressed him in a purple coat
And patent pumps so shiny.
Alas! we sent him out for buns,
But, guided by the witches,
He brought us back in half an hour
A score of women's switches.

A WONDERFUL DISCOVERY

A certain gentleman from the Emerald Isle who was unused to the ways of this country was accosted one day by a member of the sporting fraternity. This person offered to impart to him, for a modest consideration, a marvellous way to make money without toiling for it. All one needed, he said, was a small amount to bet on a certain horse that could n't possibly lose.

"And yez say Oi can get thot money without working for it?" asked the bewildered Irishman, when the other was through explaining.

"Sure thing. All the work you got to do is to count the mazuma."

"I'll thry it," said Pat.

So they hied them to a race-course, where the sporty-looking gentleman placed Pat's money at odds of five to one. And the horse won! Pat's joy was unbounded when he was handed a large roll of yellow backed bills. Calling his new-found friend to one side, he asked in a voice that trembled with excitement:

"Oi say, how long has this thing been goin' on?"

Edwin Baird

Walnuts and Wine

MENNEN'S

BORATED TALCUM

TOILET POWDER

"YOU'RE SAFE"

in the hands of the little captain at the helm,—the "complexion specialist" whose results are certain, whose fees are small.

MENNEN'S

Borated Talcum

TOILET POWDER

protects and soothes, a sure relief from **Sunburn, Prickly Heat, Chafing**, etc. Put up in **non-refillable boxes** for your protection. If Mennen's face is on the cover it is **genuine** and a guarantee of purity. Delightful after shaving.

Guaranteed under the Food and Drugs Act, June 30, 1906. Serial No. 1542. Sold everywhere, or by mail for 25 cents.

SAMPLE FREE

G. MENNEN CO.
NEWARK, N. J.

Try Mennen's Violet Borated Talcum Powder. It has the scent of fresh cut Parma Violets

"THE BOX THAT LOX"



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Walnuts and Wine

THE HISTORIAN'S HENS

An Indiana man tells of the efforts of an author belonging to the Hoosier school of historical novelists to put in his leisure time as a "hen farmer" in that State. The literary person's venture afforded his agricultural neighbors no end of amusement.

During his first year the amateur farmer discovered that all his little chickens, which were confined in coops, were languishing at the point of death. The novelist went over his "hen literature" to locate the cause of the trouble, but to no avail.

Finally he called upon an old chap named Rawlins, to whom he put the question:

"What do you suppose is the matter with those chickens?"

"Well, I dunno," said Rawlins. "What do you feed 'em?"

"Feed them!" exclaimed the novelist-farmer. "Why, I don't feed them anything!"

"Then, how 'd you s'pose they was a-goin' to live?"

"I presumed," replied the literary person, "that the old hens had milk enough for them now."

T.

SUPERSEDED

By Robert T. Hardy, Jr.

The most beautiful pair of black eyes in town
Belonged to Mrs. McCann
Till her husband went to a wake one night
And fought with a bigger man!

HARDER THAN SHE KNEW

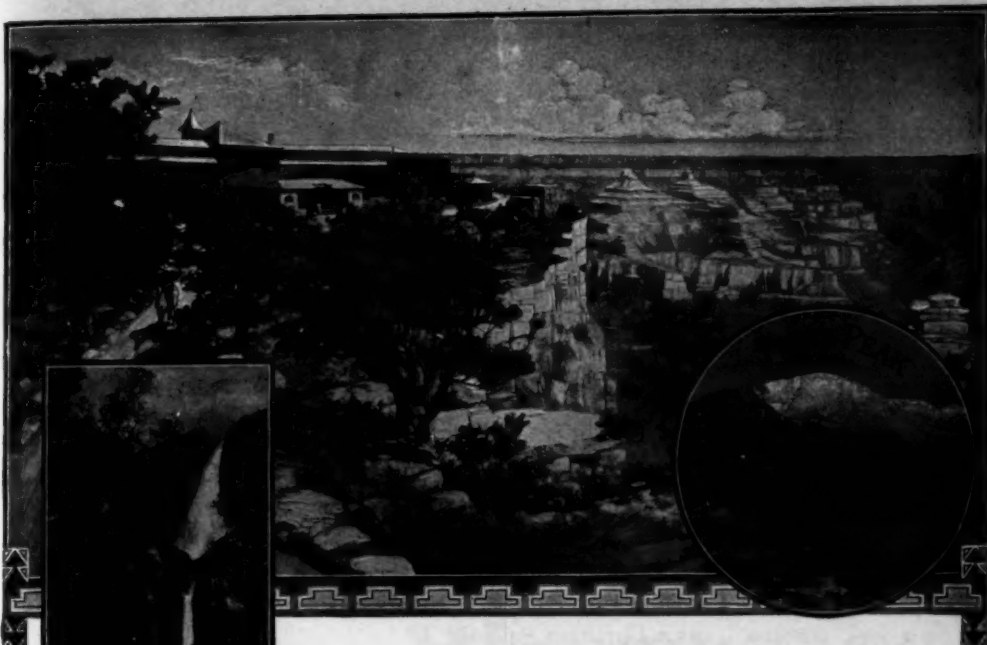
One of the directors of an art gallery in Boston tells of the sad case of a local artist, whose ill luck in disposing of his work was notorious. One day a lady interested in art matters was gushingly enthusiastic in her praise of the artist's work. To his disappointment, however, she evinced no disposition to buy.

"How interesting your work must be!" exclaimed the woman animatedly. "How very interesting! It has often occurred to me that when one has spent many anxious hours of patient and loving toil on a painting, it must become very dear to one—a thing of love. Under such circumstances, it must be very hard to part with it."

"Hard, madam?" rejoined the artist bitterly. "Hard? Sometimes it's impossible!"

Edwin Tarrisse

Walnuts and Wine



Let me suggest an ideal summer
vacation trip for you.

Go West and see the

Colorado Rockies

—the Switzerland of America

Grand Canyon of Arizona

—the world's wonder

California Sierras and Beaches

—it's cool there in midsummer

Very low excursion rates

Write for the following souvenir travel books:

"A Colorado Summer," "Titan of Chasms,"

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No. 1118-M Railway Exchange, Chicago.



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Walnuts and Wine

WILL POWER

"I wish they wouldn't leave reading wills until after the funeral."

"How so?"

"One would know so much better what flowers to send."

J. Collins

OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF BABES

Though an aristocrat from head to foot, five-year-old Bernice came to kindergarten with her small hands chapped terribly, an evidence of lack of grooming that astonished Miss Violet.

"Bernice," she suggested, "ask your mamma to put some cold cream on your hands, so they won't hurt and be rough." But the hands grew no better. After several days Miss Violet asked:

"Did you tell your mamma about the cold cream, Bernice?"

The child looked up, solemn-eyed.

"My hands can't be chapped. Mamma says it's only *mortal mind*, and I must get over it." Then Miss Violet remembered that "mamma" was a Christian Scientist.

L.

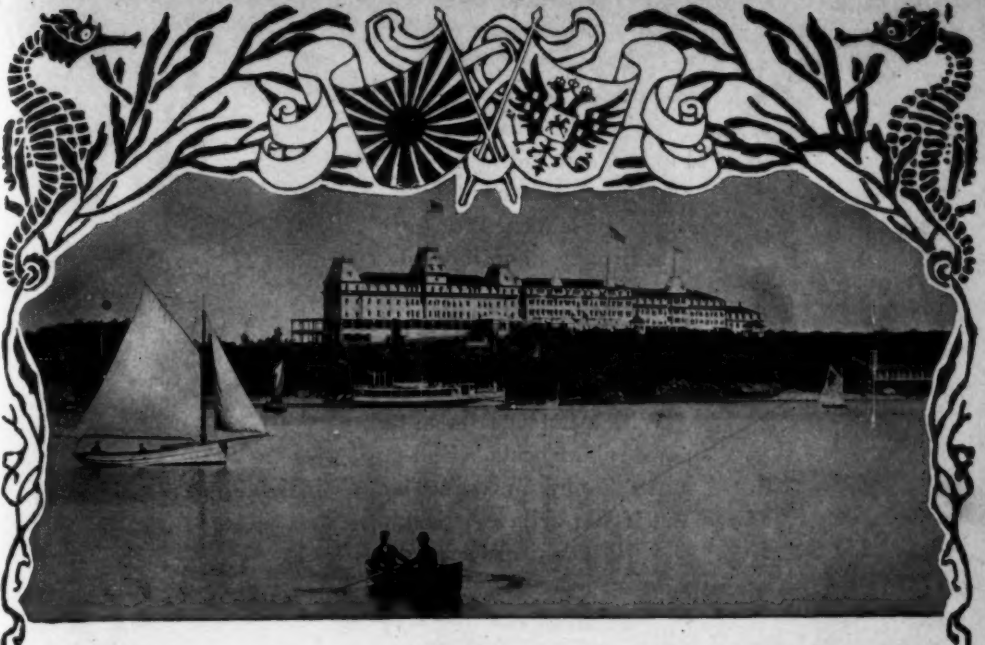
WHEN TEDDIE WRITES

By Dixie Wolcott

When Mother says, "Come, Teddie,
Come right away! Be swift!
An' write an' thank dear Gran'ma
For her lovely birthday gift,"
Why, such a drefful fuss he makes
I could n't ever tell,
He says he don't know how ter write
An' don't know how ter spell;

He wisht she 'd never sent it,
An' can't he go an' play?
His arm is hurtin' awful,
An' he b'lieves he 'll run away.
An' he cries—but nothin' helps him,
No matter how he begs,
An' spills the ink, an' fidgets,
An' kicks the table-legs;

Walnuts and Wine



HOTEL WENTWORTH

New Castle, N. H. : : : : FRANK C. HALL, Mgr.

For eighteen years America's leading and most luxurious summer hotel; 475 sunny, outside rooms, 200 private baths; all modern conveniences; several hundred acres of virgin forest, seashore front and landscape gardens; excellent clubhouse, golf course, tennis courts, canoeing, fishing, sailing, and the largest salt water bathing pool in the world.

Selected by the government for the

Russo-Japanese Peace Conference

and embodying every comfort, every convenience and every attraction that money and thought can supply. Daily programme by Carl Baer's concert orchestra of well known Boston Symphony Orchestra musicians; garage and good roads for automobiles. For a vacation of health, rest and relaxation, pure air and good water, the Wentworth offers exceptional inducements. For illustrated book, further particulars, diagram of rooms, address Frank C. Hall, Manager, 16 State Street, Boston, Mass. New York office, 74 Broadway.

The Rockingham at Portsmouth—under same management—has an excellent new garage and à la carte restaurant this season for autoists.



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Walnuts and Wine

He has to keep on writin'
Until he gets it done
Clear down to where he signs it
"Your duterful gran'son."
I'm goin' to be the nicest kind
Of gran'ma I can be,
An' never let dear little boys
Stop play to write to me.

I'll say, "My darlin' gran'son,
I send you by this mail
A little Shetlan' pony
With a fluted, frizzled tail,
Some rubber boots, a bull-pup,
An' a sure 'nuf watch an' chain;
But if you write an' thank me,
I will take 'em back again!"

A DISTINCTION AND A DIFFERENCE

He was young and thought that he knew much, but he confessed an occasional desire for further enlightenment. This time it was a legal point, and he propounded the question to his counsellor:

"Mr. Jacques, can a man get a divorce from his wife because she is not religious? I read the other day that infidelity was a cause for divorce."

Caroline A. Huling

GUSTATORIAL

A summer tourist was passing through a German village in the West recently, when a stout German girl came to the front door and called to a small girl playing in front.

"Gusty! Gusty!" she said. "Come in and eat yourself. Ma's on the table, and pa's half et!"

C. M. B.

CARDS IN THIRTY DAYS

"But why," asked his lovely fiancée, "do you object to a long engagement?"

"Because," he urged, "the cost of living increases every day, dearest. The longer we wait, the greater our expenses will be."

M. L. Wildman

Walnuts and Wine

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GOOD USE FOR IT

Two Irishmen were passing a big jewelry store, in the window of which were displayed a lot of loose diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and other precious stones.

"Ah, Pat," said Barney, "they be faine stones. How would you like your pick?"

"Och, be jabbers!" replied Pat, "I'd rayther hov me shovel!"

Charles A. Sidman

GEMS OUT OF SHAKESPEARE

By Louise Ayres Garnett

"KING HENRY IV.," Part I., Act V., Scene 4.

Two stars keep not their motion in one sphere.

Each feels that she has never had a peer,
And squabbles to the apex of her bent,
While managers are gnawed by discontent.

"MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR," Act V., Scene 5.

What cannot be eschewed must be embraced.

Sweet maiden, to eschew you were a sin,
So I will place mine arm about your waist
And meditate upon your dimpled chin.

"TWELFTH NIGHT," Act I., Scene 5.

Better a witty fool than a foolish wit.

Why parley? Facts are changed not a whit,
For each may say to t' other, "Tag, you're it!"

"THE MERCHANT OF VENICE," Act II., Scene 5.

Fast bind, fast find;

Perchance for marriage that was first design'd,
But man has found a loose thread to unwind.

"THE TEMPEST," Act I., Scene 2.

Foot it featly here and there,

Trouble's brewing in the air,
For you trod upon a nest
Where some hornets were at rest.

The New Ocean House

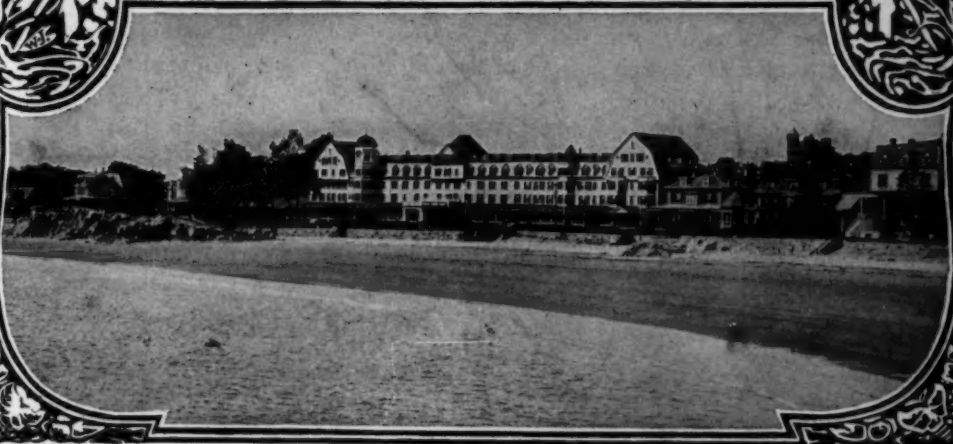
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 - ¶ Every care and facility is offered for the comfort, delight, and safety of its four hundred guests.
 - ¶ The New Ocean House has many large and luxuriously appointed rooms arranged en suite with bath and modern improvements.
 - ¶ The beach, opposite Hotel, is smooth and sandy where safe surf bathing may be enjoyed—no undertow.
 - ¶ No day seems long enough while there to fully appreciate the lavish hospitality, the health-giving charm, of the out-door life—tennis, driving, sailing, fishing, well-managed garage, spacious stable, picturesque shaded walks and the broad, smooth roads are acceded to be the finest in America for driving and automobiling.
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Walnuts and Wine

THERE IS HOPE

By Gilbert Crane

Said the Peace Dove, "My brood at the Hague
Is very distressingly vague,
For the man with the gun
Is still looking for fun,
But at least I have there laid an egg!"

POOR CONSOLATION

Aunt Lucindy was in deep distress over the loss of her son Jim, and a neighbor sought to console her, saying:

"Don't grieve for him, Aunt Lucindy. He has gone to a land flowing with milk and honey."

With a dismal countenance, the old darky replied:

"Jim never did like milk, an' honey always make him sick."

S. L. Payne

ROSENTHAL'S CONGRATULATIONS

Rosenthal (asking after the health of his sick friend, *Lipsky*, over the 'phone): "Hello! How iss Mr. Lipsky dis morning?"

Mrs. Lipsky: "He iss failing fast!"

Rosenthal: "Ah-hah! Giff him my congratulations. I did n't know he vas recovered enough to be back to pizness!"

Charles C. Mullin

A LONG FELT WANT

"You get right out of here!" snapped the vinegary-faced female. "I don't need no book!"

"Yes, you do, madam," said the book agent, as he went out and closed the gate; "you need two—a grammar and a book on etiquette. Good day;" and he got out of hearing distance long before she had said all she wanted to.

Robert T. Hardy, Jr.

THE ORIGIN OF HONEY

"Oh, dear!" fretted Mabel, rushing into the house one of the first hot days of spring, "the bumblebees have come, and I just hate 'em!"

"I don't hate bees," said little Katherine; "I love 'em—'cause they hatch out honey."

J. M. Sewell

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ANOTHER INNOCENT ABROAD

He was from Ohio, and there was nothing of which he was more proud, unless, perchance, it was that his native town lay in Champagne County. He was rather amusingly given to proclaiming both facts.

When political preferment came to him it took him over to the Land of the Rising Sun. As he walked up the pier at Yokohama, he was met by a smiling Jap—a runner for one of the city's hotels—who barked out the usual cheerful greeting: "*Ohayo!*" (pronounced "Ohio").

The American knew nothing of the Japanese tongue, not even that word of casual "How-de-do," but it sounded delightfully familiar.

"You bet I am," chirruped he, "and from Champagne County at that!"

Warwick James Price

THE CAUSE

By Harold Susman

"Jack writes such gushing letters,"

Said Angeline to Gwen.

"Yes, but we must remember

He has a fountain-pen!"

A STEADY FIRE

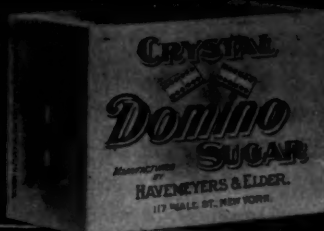
During the discussion of the Madden bill for cheaper gas Congressman Legare told the following story of a cook he had once brought from home with him. She was a splendid servant, but she did n't know anything about gas to cook with, so he went to the kitchen with her, to explain about the range. So that she could see how it was operated, he lit each of the many burners. While still explaining, a message called him from the kitchen, and he left her, saying, "I guess you will find that it will work all right now, Martha." He did n't see the cook again for four or five days, then upon entering the kitchen he said, "Well, Martha, how 's that range doing?"

To his utter consternation she replied, "'Deed, sir, that 's the best stove I ever did see. That fire what you kindled for me four days ago is still a-burning, and it ain't even lowered once."

L. B. Ward

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The biographical notices included in previous editions have been brought down to date, and a great number of new names have been added: so that the book in its latest edition is complete to the opening year of the twentieth century, and stands to-day—as always since the publication of its first edition—without a peer among works of similar intent and scope. Among the many features of excellence which have called forth the highest praise from hundreds of men prominent in the affairs of mankind may be cited specifically the admirable system of Orthography, repeated on every page for the sake of convenience; and the comprehensive plan of Pronunciation, the data for which were secured by Dr. Thomas during an extended sojourn in Europe and the Orient.

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A CONSOLING THOUGHT

A young authoress who has been uniformly unsuccessful in selling her manuscripts recently said to me, in all seriousness and with the sweetest spirit:

"When I suffer from disappointment and thwarted ambition I go to a funeral to seek relief. Seeing the motionless figure at rest impresses it on me that we shall all be so some day—my own fevered heart, the very editor who refused me—and I feel a certain consolation in the thought!"

C. W. M.

LITERATURE AS SHE IS MADE

Alfred Austin, the famous poet, was getting the jimmies again. He had just written:

"She came gentle as the flowers in May."

"That is n't quite right," he muttered. "Let's see if we can't turn it around."

Then he wrote:

"As the gentle flowers in May, so came she."

"Now that's all right," he said, "but I don't like it."

He tried again.

"The gentle flowers in May came like she."

"Now I'm getting a line on it," he commented; "and yet—and yet I'd like to have it changed a little before it goes to press."

Struck by an inspiration, he wrote:

"Like the gentle flowers in May, she came."

Nailing the line against the wall, he surveyed it critically.

"Gadzooks! That is the way the common barn-yard poet of commerce would lick his lines into place. What's the use of being poet laureate if my poems don't go out the way I feel like writing them? Now the trouble is," he continued, "that I've already decided to use 'gay' to end the second line below, and the word 'May' is the only word that rhymes with it. So, Maizie, you're it. When a man is paid by the poem he can afford to take his time, but being poet laureate with a regular job, I'm losing money on that word. 'She came like the gentle flowers in May.' That rhymes with gay, bouquet, sachet, and recipe. That's the way the daddinged line is going to stay, and if the public does n't like it, the public be ——."

Thus another favorite quotation was launched into an unsuspecting world. Which? Either.

Reed Moyer

Walnuts and Wine

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ELOPING UP-TO-DATE

By Maurice Rutherford

The coatless man puts a careless arm
'Round the waist of the hatless girl,
While over the dustless, mudless roads
In a horseless wagon they whirl.
Like a leadless bullet from hammerless gun,
By smokeless powder driven,
They fly to taste the speechless joys
By endless union given.

The only luncheon his coinless purse
Affords to them the means
Is a tasteless meal of boneless cod,
With a dish of stringless beans.
He smokes his old tobaccoless pipe,
And laughs a mirthless laugh
When papa tries to coax her back
By wireless telegraph.

HE THOUGHT SO

Upon seeing the skin peeling from his father's sun-burnt face,
Wilfred hurried to his mother, exclaiming:

"Oh, ma, come quick! Pa's unwrapping!"

F. P. Pitzer

COMPROMISING

Mr. Dollars, who had "broken into society," was often put to it to hide his ignorance. One evening he attended a soirée where the subject of authors came up.

"You remember that quotation from Shakespeare?" said a young man, to include Mr. Dollars in the conversation—"one of William Shakespeare's plays," he added kindly, to help the old man along.

"Oh—Bill Shakespeare!" exclaimed Mr. Dollars bumptiously. "So he's taken to writing plays, has he? Why, I went to school with Bill."

"And 'George Sand'?" put in the wag of the party. "You know the celebrated 'George Sand'?"

Mr. Dollars dismissed the query with a wave of the hand and a careless "My room-mate at school."

Helen Sherman Griffith

Walnuts and Wine



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COUNTLESS ATTEMPTS HAVE BEEN MADE

to eradicate our grievous social evils. Thus far all such attempts have proved inadequate, and yet it is admitted that conditions really require some profound change. A serious difficulty hitherto has been the fact that the proposed systems could not be put into operation without some radical legal, social, ethical, or educational change. The system set forth in "Gillette's Social Redemption"—a notable volume just from the press—is a luminous exception to this general rule, in that it requires no sudden upheaval of the present trend of affairs, depends upon no special legislation, does not require that the race shall be regenerated, but proposes to handle conditions as they exist, and to deal with fallible, selfish human nature as it is to-day.

The presentation of this system, which is made by Melvin L. Severy, is a review of present world-wide conditions, and is illumined by convincing charts and illustrations. The deplorable conditions in the Congo, the barbarities of Russia, the Turkish Armenian atrocities, political corruption, military cruelties, our poisoned food supply, universal carelessness of life, and the many causes and results of social pressure, are all treated with the carefulness and thoroughness which characterize the entire work.

"Truth has rough flavors if we bite it through," and the facts stated in "Gillette's Social Redemption" are not written for the entertainment of the reader. They have the flavor of truth.

The proposed remedy for the evils of present conditions is a simple and novel plan invented by King C. Gillette, who is well known as a practical, successful business man.

It is claimed for this system that it is as unflinching and impersonal,—as free from favoritism and as coldly exact,—as a perfectly interacting, self-regulating mechanism of steel—in short, a perfectly arranged business proposition.

The thesis of the work is that if the great wastes of our present system were eliminated and effort rewarded upon a system of equity, man would be able abundantly to supply all his present needs by three or four hours' work a day, thus leaving him time for mental and physical improvement.

Financially, the new system proposes to bring about the amelioration of the race by organizing a world-wide corporation with an unlimited, elastic, and constantly self-adjusting capitalization,—a capitalization which shall represent the exact amount of the corporate assets, falling as they fall, rising as they rise. This corporation will make no distinctions of locality, race, color, nationality, social condition, age, sex, or occupation. Its purposes are manifold. First, it aims to offer to every human being an opportunity for investing his earnings with a more far-reaching safeguard against loss, than any other proposition heretofore presented to the human race. He will be able to invest his money and draw his dividends at the same time that he holds his earnings subject to check; for the corporation purposes the establishment of banks all over the world,—banks in which depositors become investors and sharers in the profits of the whole system, without losing any of their rights as depositors.

This plan of Mr. Gillette's is so thoroughly worked out in all its details, that its advocates are confident of its speedy success. "It is built upon the bed-rock of fundamental democracy and its key-note is justice. With the advent of such a system will come the regeneration of the human race."

A perusal of the book will put before the reader many suggestions impossible to be touched by a brief review, and is abundantly worth while. The volume is from the press of Herbert B. Turner & Co., Boston.

Walnuts and Wine

HE KNEW

Just before the annual meeting of the school teachers of the state of North Carolina was called to order, the delegates were bunched in twos and threes around the hall, swapping experiences of the past year. One vivacious young "schoolmarm" told of one of her pupils—a little chap about ten years of age—who was ever ready with a reply to any question put to him, whether the answer was right or wrong.

One day she had asked this boy what were the principal commercial products of Massachusetts.

"Boots and shoes," he answered.

"Very good, Charlie," said the teacher. "Now can you tell me the products of Kentucky?"

"Shoots and booze," came the quick reply.

Frank N. Bauskell

THE BALANCED ACCOUNT

By Richard Kirk

Said Richman, "Neighbors, would you thrive?

Then learn of me how two and two make five!"

Said Poorman, "Verily, I see,

For us poor folk must two and two make three!"

HIS LARGE FAMILY

A Washington scientist was recently much amused by a conversation between two young colored men who were discussing the scientific attainments of a fellow negro.

"There's no use in talking, Jim," said one of the negroes, "that man Morgan is certainly cultivated and educated to the limit. I was at a party the other night, and he kept the company entranced for over an hour explaining science to us."

"What did he talk about?" asked the second negro.

"Everything scientific," was the reply, "but principally he told us how we are all descended from Mr. Darwin."

Fenimore Martin

THOSE DEAR GIRLS

Nell: "She always said she wanted a husband who was easily pleased."

Bess: "Did she get such a one?"

Nell: "Why, yes; didn't he marry her?"

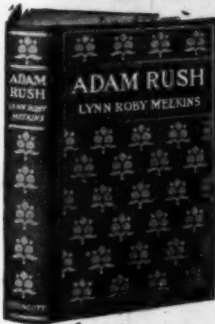
George Frederick Wilson

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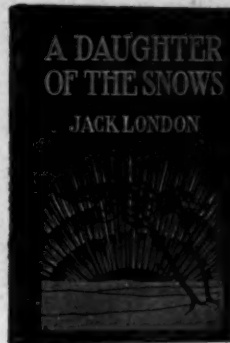
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Walnuts and Wine

SUITABLE DIET

A jury in Blankville were sent out to decide a case, and after deliberating for a time came back, and the foreman told the judge they were unable to agree upon a verdict. The latter rebuked the jury, saying the case was a very clear one, and remanded them back to the jury room for a second attempt, adding, "If you are there too long, I will have to send you in twelve suppers."

The foreman, in a rather irritated tone, spoke up and said, "May it please you honor, you might send in eleven suppers and one bundle of hay."

Louis Repplier

TIME AND PLACE

A little six-year-old Philadelphia girl was sent to the family physician for a vaccination certificate, so that she could enter school. The certificate requires the date of vaccination. Not remembering when he had done it, he said, "Janet, how long are you vaccinated?" To which Janet innocently replied, "Here it is on my leg, about an inch long."

J. L. S.

SENATOR HAWLEY'S DARWINISM

Senator Hawley was a guest at the Savage Club during his last visit to London. In the course of the dinner an argument arose between two Englishmen, across the table, on the popular idea of the Darwin theory. The one supporting it was of the caricatured stamp—not one to appeal to Senator Hawley's robust Americanism. He was pointedly asked by the other if he really believed that his great-grandfather was an ape, and earnestly replied: "I weally do, now, don't you know."

Senator Hawley turned to the writer, who was sitting next to him, and under his great gray mustache muttered:

"That's all right for him, now, don't you know; but it's beastly hard on his great-grandfather."

Willard French

THE WOMAN IN BUSINESS

She handed in a check payable to Susan H. Smith. The cashier, who was a German, noticed that she had endorsed it Susan Smith, and gave it back with a polite "You haf forgotten the 'H.'" Overcome with confusion, she murmured, "Excuse me," and wrote below the endorsement, "Age 23."

E. Hall